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PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY has here brought together a number of lectures and articles written during the past fourteen years, and therefore covering the period between the weakening in the first great experiment in world management by international conference and the setting up of the second. In view of the part that the author has played in commending the idea and endeavouring to further the practice of international unity, his new book has a marked historical interest. In a specially written introduction Professor Murray holds out the hope that, in respect of the control of armaments and the prohibition of war, the nations may be induced to surrender their national sovereignties to some œcumenical body, because they will at length realize the intolerable inconvenience of doing otherwise. 'A beginning of world government, hitherto an impracticable dream,' he concludes, 'may be transformed into a mere obvious line of least resistance by the necessity of controlling the Atom Bomb.'



FROM  
THE LEAGUE  
TO  
U.N.



FROM  
THE LEAGUE  
TO  
U. N.

BY  
GILBERT MURRAY

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*From*  
ONE OF THE OLDEST CHAIRMEN AND GUIDES  
OF THE L.N.U.

*to*  
THE NEW CHAIRMAN AND PATHFINDER  
OF THE U.N.A.  
AIR VICE-MARSHAL  
DONALD BENNETT, D.S.O.

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# I

## INTRODUCTION

**F**EW forms of literature are less attractive than a reprint of old speeches when the thrill of the moment has gone and the immediate issues have become stale. If I venture to publish these lectures delivered at various universities during the last fourteen years, between the weakening of the first great experiment in world management by international conference and the setting up of the second, it is that I think they may have a certain historical interest.

I published in 1928 *The Ordeal of This Generation* (Allen & Unwin) when the League had just accomplished its first ten years in increasing, though not uninterrupted, success. The present book starts after the League had begun to lose its hold, considers the history of its collapse, the start under much worse conditions of the second experiment, and the new problems that have succeeded the old. I confess that to me the whole movement seems a thing of overwhelming importance in the history of mankind. The question whether nations are habitually to co-operate as honest neighbours or to scheme against one another as secret enemies is one of supreme practical urgency. The answer to it means either world peace or world war; and that constitutes an issue much clearer and of vastly greater consequence than those aroused by the ordinary issues of party conflict. Man can live what Aristotle calls 'a good life' under Capitalism or Socialism, free democracy or oligarchy, under republics or monarchies, or the various current mixtures between them; he cannot do so while his nation is concentrating all its powers and aspirations on preparation for doing the maximum possible evil to other collections of human beings and they to it, and while it is only by doing this evil that it can hope to save life or freedom.

If the new effort after world peace fails, as on a cold material calculation of the chances appears most likely, I think that scientific historians, if any survive, will feel a tragic interest in this strange attempt of a past age, so alien from the atmosphere in which they will then be living, to establish a united and peaceful world; if it succeeds, as the heart of man feels that it must and shall, they will probably like to understand the nature of the popular effort which, in this country as in others, has been required in order to bring about a result so obviously simple and desirable. Even if, like most human efforts, it ends in a confused mixture between success and failure, the efforts of the pioneers will still possess the ordinary degree of interest attaching to such things. People will like to know how the normal advocates of the League or U.N. felt and thought, and I seem to myself to have some claims to be a good instance of such a class. I was a whole-hearted advocate of the League cause from 1915 to 1946; I was never in parliament and thus never subjected to party pressure; my long experience as Chairman of the Executive of the League of Nations Union, and afterwards as Joint President of the whole organization, enabled me to appreciate the point of view of 'good Leaguers' on all sides in politics.

The nation's attitude towards the League of Nations Union and the whole League movement varied from time to time. I remember a suspicious visit of the police to our head-quarters in 1917; I remember a stentorian voice from the gallery of the Albert Hall in 1919 shouting in language which only its Elizabethan quality redeemed from reproach: 'Robert Cecil, you are a bloody traitor.' In later times criticism was calmer and less dramatic. We were exposed to attack from many sides, but I think our errors, under Lord Cecil's far-sighted and experienced guidance, were remarkably few. We were ridiculed as cranks with our new and fantastic 'League of Notions'; as unpatriotic, with no pride in the Empire and its achievements; as unpractical pacifists when

'advocating general disarmament, and as war-mongers when demanding the fulfilment of the obligations of the League against aggressors. Public opinion seldom thinks far ahead: it is too apt to be guided by the feelings of the moment. We were especially blamed for the alleged bad effects of our National Declaration, or 'Peace Ballot', which obtained the answers of more than 11½ million people—more than any political party had obtained at any general election—to a series of questions covering the whole of League policy. While this showed a majority of over twenty to one in favour of Britain remaining a member of the League, when it came to the question of 'military sanctions', that is, of collective war against an aggressor, the Yes-votes, while still forming a decisive majority, were only three to one instead of twenty to one; 6 million 'Ayes' against 2 million 'Noes', with 2 million abstentions. This result, or rather the misrepresentation of it, is alleged to have led to an over-estimate of the nation's unwillingness to fight, which did serious harm abroad and encouraged the policy of 'appeasement' towards Germany at home. This may be true, but, if it is, the main fault is due to the refusal of Conservative head-quarters to have anything to do with the Declaration, while the Liberal and Labour parties co-operated actively. The movement could never do its best without Conservative support. Conservative speakers could have done valuable service—and many did—in pointing out that no guarantee of collective peace is possible unless the nations concerned are ready, in the last resort, to use force against the aggressor. The leaders of the Union always emphasized this point, but any large political movement is sure to have an emotional fringe, and the prevalent national emotion at the time was undoubtedly hatred of war. The abstention of the Conservatives left this emotion more uncontrolled by thought than it need have been. The leaders of the Union themselves were quite clear in their opposition to unilateral disarmament, in their insistence that economic sanctions were impossible without

military sanctions in the background, and on the necessity of collective force to support the law against the criminal.

When I think candidly of my own personal mistakes, I must admit that I under-estimated the increased violence of nationalist passions throughout the world as a result of the War. Nationalism had been so obvious a source of disastrous evil that I assumed it was generally discredited among the mass of mankind as it was among thoughtful people. It took many of us some time to see this mistake. Again, my foreign contacts being mostly with those foreigners who came to Geneva and with the great savants and writers whom I met through the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, I over-rated the reasonable and peace-loving elements in Europe, though I was often pulled up by the fierce intolerance of so many student societies. Then, no doubt, I did in my own mind overrate the military value of a combination of allies, most of them of second- or third-rate military resources, as against one highly organized Great Power. It remains to be seen whether the Military Committee of the Chiefs of Staff who are to advise U.N. will be able to organize the forces of their member nations into an effective striking force with uniform weapons and a single command, as the Russians, for example, are doing with their puppet states. Lastly, there is one purely personal error which I greatly regret. After ceasing to be a delegate at the Assembly of the League, I remained for many years Vice-President and afterwards President of the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation. That Committee represented an idea initiated by M. Bergson and M. Léon Bourgeois and supported by Mr. Balfour: the idea of making use of the artistic, scientific, and literary interests which are actually common to all cultivated nations as an instrument for achieving that goodwill and co-operation which was the aim of the League. It was to make *une société d'esprits*, or, as Bergson put it, to 'give the League a soul'. The idea, I think, is perfectly sound. That unity of Europe in the things of the mind is a fact: several

times, when it seemed that all doors between nations were shut, one found that intercourse in music, painting, philosophy, science, and letters remained alive and acted as a force of goodwill. However, England never quite liked it. It was sometimes said at Geneva that the only subject on which all the Dominions and the Mother Country were sure to be unanimous was in voting against Intellectual Co-operation. The gibe was not quite true; the imperfectly Anglo-Saxon Dominion of India always dared to approve of the intellect.

I am ashamed of my failure in Great Britain to convince either the people or the Government of the value of this work. Perhaps it is true that we in England mostly think of professors and savants as eccentric characters, suitable for comedy, whereas the Latin countries are thrilled by them and name streets after them. I am sure that in country after country the C.I.C. conferences, bringing together famous savants of different nations working for the League and discussing subjects in a League spirit, had a real effect, though not one easily measurable or definable. I think, for instance, of the Goethe centenary in Frankfurt, the 'conversation' on the future of letters in Paris, or the discussion at Warsaw of the effects on philosophy of the recent discoveries in physical science. Our government never thought it worth while to have such a meeting in England, and perhaps it would have made little impression on public opinion if they had. The Commission's more 'practical' achievements had a certain recognition; our work on the Assembly Resolution, proposed by the British and unanimously accepted, that young people in all countries (*la jeunesse mondiale*) should know something of 'the work and aims of the League of Nations', and should be accustomed 'to regard international co-operation as the normal method of world government'; the great change we helped to bring about in history text-books throughout the world; the informal agreements with radio companies and film companies, the Students' Conferences, and the special

facilities for student travelling, the studies of education by radio, and the like. But intellectual co-operation in itself—I can find no more pleasing title which would be equally exact—made little appeal here.

When I think of the noble spirit shown by the previous presidents Bergson and Lorenz, by statesmen like M. Herriot and before him M. Painlevé, of great scientists like Einstein, Langevin, and Mme Curie, men of letters like Paul Valéry, Thomas Mann, Huizinga, and De Reynold, of the disinterested and inspiring enthusiasm of Henri Bonnet, then Director of the Institute and now French Ambassador in the United States; still more when I think of those who went through suffering and peril in various countries because they shared in our work or our spirit, I gravely reproach myself that, while year after year they re-elected me President, I succeeded so ill in making their cause known and appreciated in this country. Had Great Britain really thrown her heart into this work we might have succeeded in stemming the tide of Fascist fashion among the young people of Europe. My error was partly discretion merging into moral cowardice, partly a confidence that after all the heaven was working and that results would convince people much better than any laboured exhortations of mine, which could hardly have avoided appearing egotistic—though over a hundred other British savants co-operated at different times with the commission, among whom the most constant were Sir Frank Heath and Sir Frederic Kenyon. The whole cause no doubt was one apt to be neglected by ‘practical’ politicians. I can only hope that the long uphill and unregarded labours of the C.I.C. have at least done something to prepare the public mind for a whole-hearted support of U.N.E.S.C.O.

These separate lectures form between them a kind of plot. I start indeed slightly out of the strict chronological order with my Romanes Lecture on the state in which our western world is left after the social changes, so multitudinous and rapid, which were in my judgement making



our civilization unstable and difficult to maintain. I was reminded of the demoralization which generally overtakes some primitive tribe when its traditional beliefs and customs are shattered by the impact of some stronger and richer alien civilization. I was confident, however, that we could safely surmount our troubles, provided only that a second world war could be avoided; and that was still my hope. The next paper, *The Cult of Violence*, deals with a specimen year of increasing trouble, marked by the Nazi pogroms and the murders of Dollfuss, King Alexander, and Barthou, crimes doubly significant because they were open, successful, and unpunished. It illustrates the formidable dangers with which the forces of peace were faced. I still hoped, but I was wrong. The third essay is a comment on the failure of the League to prevent the Second World War and the proved falsity of my own forecasts.

The Second War caused among the mass of disappointed people a feeling that both the Covenant itself and the whole League system of the pursuit of peace and security by 'self-determination', mutual justice, and international co-operation was a mere nineteenth-century delusion; that moral ideals were out of place in politics; liberalism an out-of-date luxury, 'collective security' a will-o'-the-wisp; small nations militarily negligible and bound of necessity to obey their betters; and the politics of power the only reality. This view is seen perhaps at its best in Professor E. H. Carr's book *The Conditions of Peace*, which deserves special note as showing an early symptom of a disease which has by this time mastered a great part of Europe and shows signs of infecting those sections of British opinion, on the extreme left and extreme right, who hate the whole liberal tradition which is the result of our long security and peace. The disease is generated by war, especially civil war. To this country in normal circumstances it is utterly repugnant, but if wars continue it may well become inevitable.

It is certainly not so yet. I venture to reprint an answer

which I gave at the B.B.C. Brains Trust in March 1943, expressing my unshaken conviction that an organization on League lines must certainly be re-established. It is a trifling extempore utterance, but I think it showed the average opinion of supporters of the L.N.U. at a time when most of our membership had fallen away, our best workers were at war-work, and the League utterly out of fashion. True, the tide was already turning. To any intelligent observer the re-establishing process had already begun, so I can hardly claim for my answer a place in the scanty and distinguished ranks of prophecies which against all expectation have come true. But at least it has come true, and I think we all feel now, even more strongly than before, that the success or failure of the whole undertaking depends not on the theoretical merits or demerits of the new Charter as compared with the old Covenant, but simply on the practical question whether the United Nations remain United. Even the veto on *investigation*, monstrous as it is, is subsidiary to that.

These considerations lead me to the subject of the final five essays, two of which recur to the general theme of *Then and Now*, while the rest deal more directly with U.N. and collective security. I need not anticipate them here. Obviously we have not attained that ideal of world peace towards which the League of Nations movement was the first modern experiment. The second experiment will be in some ways an improvement, in others decidedly a falling back, since we are sunk much deeper in the slough than in 1919, and can look on the troubles of 1914 as little more than surface mud upon a clean and firm soil. /The struggle for peace and international law is now handed on to a new generation, and largely to one which has never lived under normal conditions of peaceful citizenship, and only knows by hearsay the meaning of such things as true Civilization and Liberality. Yet they have had other great experiences which the older generation lacked, an experience of the brutalities of war and the demoralization that follows them, but also of

the comradeship of war, which seems to have taught many of them a power of endurance, of adaptability, of imagination, of mutual kindness and self-sacrifice, which may make them fitter than their elders could be for dealing with a new and very dangerous world whose problems cannot for the most part be foreseen. Britain is faced already by a difficult problem of 'appeasement', with Russia in the place of Germany; such problems always depend on the question whether the other party is a competitor who can by reasonable and generous treatment be converted into a friend, or a determined enemy who will treat every concession as a step towards ultimate surrender. A deeper problem still is involved in the treatment of our late enemies, especially Germany. The strange ill success of allied diplomacy after the First World War, which allowed the growth in Germany of increased bitterness instead of reconciliation, and at the same time of increased military strength instead of disarmament, was partly due to American indifference, which left the Allies too weak for the effective maintenance of law, and partly to the constant difference in policy between Britain and France. France was determined to keep Germany weak for fear of another attack; Britain wished to have Germany reconciled, recognizing that while a nation of 70 million people remained smouldering with savage hatred in the heart of the Continent, Europe could never have peace. Either policy consistently carried out might have succeeded; the two wisely co-ordinated would probably have succeeded; the two constantly interrupted and each thwarting the other inevitably led to disaster. The work of the next generation is to keep the two combined; Germany must not be allowed to become a great military power; her motives for renewing the struggle are too strong. That element in our policy is obvious to anyone. The other element is less immediately obvious but in the long run equally essential, and even more permanently essential. The real need is not for mere precautionary Security, but for active Reconciliation. Some

words of the Duke of Wellington are worth always remembering. When certain of his advisers dwelt on the need of crippling the military power of France and rooting out the secret Bonapartists who still had influence in every town and village, he answered that nothing should be allowed to divert us from 'our main purpose, which is the peace and tranquillity of the world'. Germany is geographically the vital centre of Europe. Germans and Austrians must not be forced to starve, nor allowed to starve. They must not be driven to despair, nor suffered to fall into despair. As for 're-education', they cannot be made to accept British or American political fashions as if they were deep philosophic truths. They can perhaps be induced to think more of reason and objective truth, and to cease to drug themselves with romantic dreams. They can, I think, be encouraged to remember the real epoch of German greatness, when the name German suggested, not Hitler and Goering, not even Bismarck and Moltke, but Goethe and Kant and Hegel and Beethoven and Lessing; when German universities were a sort of Mecca to the pilgrims of learning throughout the world, and Germany meant to English travellers a friendly land where hotels did not cheat and people did not expect bribes. The Germany of that time was the most respected, and I would almost say the best-loved, country in Europe, not only by Germanophiles like Carlyle and Liberal historians like Kingsley and Freeman, but by average exponents of intelligent public opinion. The quotation on pp. 136-7 from *The Times* of 31 December 1870 illustrates what I mean. No doubt *The Times* was wrong. The evil seed of militarism had by then been already planted in Germany, though it had not yet revealed its fruit. To us, with our memories of Belsen and Nuremberg, such words seem almost incredible. But that is what Germany once was, and what by a heroic effort she may become again. Germans have much to unlearn, much to learn, most of all to learn that the recovery of such a character and such an intellectual eminence is a far

nobler ambition than the *Vernichtung Frankreichs* and the destruction of the British Fleet. It will be a hard task, but the Germans' harshest critics do not deny them two gifts, the power of endurance and the power of devotion to an ideal. The educational section of the British Control seems to have made an excellent start.

The instinct against which we of the League of Nations fought, and are still fighting, is deeply ingrained in human nature. All that the extreme militarists say on that point is true. ✓ Every living creature strives for growth, strives for power. There is a lesson to be learnt from those slow films which show the roots of a tree or plant reaching out persistently, mercilessly, without regard for the weaker rivals it may starve in the struggle, for the sustenance which means growth and life either for it or for them. ✓ Life is like that, except that the plant has no conscience, no civilization, whereas men and human societies have both. It is for conscience and civilization that good men must vigilantly and without ceasing exert themselves, since the craving for power, open or latent, is always at work, in nations as in classes, in statesmen as in children. ✓ The whole history of Europe reinforces the judgement of two ancient Greek writers, that the source of most public evils is the desire for power over others (*Archê*) and that this power is 'like a wicked courtesan, who makes nation after nation in love with her and then betrays them, one after another, to their ruin'.<sup>1</sup> ✓ That is the truth, but even in the most civilized and experienced nations not everyone sees it; in the uncivilized and inexperienced it can find but few followers. And the effect of the two Wars and the movements of liberation accompanying them has been to lessen the influence of the civilized part of mankind and increasingly to establish that of the less civilized. The power of North America and western Europe was no doubt often abused, but it did on the whole make for order and good government. As it withdraws, who can tell what effects

<sup>1</sup> Isocrates, viii. 103; Thucydides, iii. 82.

may be produced on the problems of the next generation? Fortunately the influence of the United States will be very strong, but vast territories and populations already stand in peril of change. The militarization of China, with its 400 millions, is at least a possibility. The withdrawal from India of British guidance, however desirable on other grounds, may leave the horrors of communal strife in that teeming sub-continent uncontrolled and the methods of government reduced to an oriental standard. The increased power and ambitions of the Moscow Government will not only strengthen the east of Europe as against the more humane and civilized west, but may also bring into play that uncharted and unexplored immensity which we call Asiatic Russia. It is a new fact, and may prove a very sinister one, that the vast majority of the human race will presently be no longer subject to the prestige nor respectful of the standards of the great nations of Christendom.

And meantime man's powers of destruction are vastly increased; so vastly indeed that they may undo their own evil, and, if faced in a resolute and constructive spirit, bring about the actual abolition of war. I know that hopes of this kind have accompanied every invention of new engines of destruction and every time have proved an utter delusion. Man has always been at least as much attracted by the prospect of using the new invention to destroy his enemies as deterred by the thought of their using it on him. But I doubt if that is the whole story. All the existing great nations have been built up out of small independent nations, each proud of its sovereignty and prepared to fight for its rights, until at last they were forced, not exactly by terror but by the intolerable inconvenience of intestine wars, to abate their claims and accept a unified government as parts in an organized whole. Is not the world now in very many respects already more of an organized whole than, say, England or France was in the Middle Ages or Germany a brief century ago? And the process is increasing in rapidity.

Historians have said that the worst thing about recent wars in Europe was that they were really civil wars, created by violent strains inside a whole which was striving to be a unity. Civil war is a misery to the whole community. It interferes with everybody's daily life. It may therefore be that in one single but all-important detail, the control of armaments and prohibition of war, nations will be induced to surrender their sovereignty to some oecumenical body because of the intolerable inconvenience of doing otherwise. A beginning of world government, hitherto an utterly impracticable dream, may be transformed into a mere obvious line of least resistance by the necessity of controlling the atom bomb.





BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR



## II

### THEN AND NOW

#### *The Changes of the Last Fifty Years*

**T**HEOPOMPUS, the great Carlylesque historian of the Age of Alexander, tells a story which has been imitated by scores of romancers since, how a certain Cretan boy, called Epimenides, was sent by his father to take some sheep to the city to market; how he turned aside in the heat of the day to sleep under a tree, and woke up fifty-seven years after to find things about him considerably changed. I suspect, from what we know of Theopompus, that they were changed for the worse. At any rate Epimenides found them unintelligible until they were explained to him by his younger brother, whom he had left as a lively urchin and now re-met as an elder of the City with a white beard.

Suppose Epimenides had fallen asleep in the 1870s or 80s and re-awoken to-day, I wonder what he would have thought, as soon as he had recovered from his first dazzle. He would find a changed world, no doubt; but, what is more unusual, he would find a world intensely and almost morbidly conscious of change. Writers and artists, men of science, and even the tired brains of politicians are almost obsessed by the contrast between their own attitude to life and something which they call 'Victorian'. They have the most bizarre conceptions of the Victorian Age, the Victorian father, the Victorian daughter, the Victorian novelist or poet. Indeed, Professor Andrew Bradley has said that the supposed Victorian family is the one great creative work of the Georgian imagination.

One mistake is always made in our imaginative pictures of the past. Whatever age we take, the peace of the past is upon it; we see it as something static, unalterable. We do not realize the rapid movement of the Victorian age, the adventure, the conflict of ideas, the aspirations sometimes baffled,

sometimes triumphant, which made up the stuff of life at that time as at other times. We quarrel with the Victorians partly from mere jealousy; we want to pull those august figures down from their pedestals, to show up the flaws in that monotonous record of success. But I suggest that the main contrast between that age and our own, the contrast which haunts and exasperates our younger writers, is that in some sense the Victorian Age formed a *Cosmos*, a more or less intelligible and reasonable Order, while we with all our brilliant discoveries and improvements are bewildered beings, struggling in a kind of chaos. *Cosmos*, a reasonable world-order, is what we would give our eyes to attain, and we cannot attain it.

In making brief statements about a whole age and an age in rapid movement it is impossible, of course, to tell the whole truth. Everything I say here is stated too crudely, and I am concentrating upon those elements in the late Victorian Age which entered most into my own experience—the elements which enabled Mr. Gladstone at the close of his days to sum up his life's work in the phrase: 'I have presided over a great revolution.'

The Victorian Age deserved the name given to it in Mr. Marvin's book, *The Century of Hope*. It was a time of growing prosperity, of confidence, of enlightenment, and consequently of liberality. A time when the enfranchised classes, being in comfort and security, took pride in extending their privileges—in small bits—to the less fortunate. I say 'security' because, strangely enough, the mass of educated people did not think much about the danger which actually brought the age to disaster—the international anarchy which led to the War. There was much growth of intercourse and of goodwill between nation and nation. We never thought of passports or spies or *agents provocateurs* except in terms of a romantic past, like the drowning of witches and the burning of heretics. Political refugees were rare, and always found a welcome in England. Foreign merchants were free to buy

and sell. There was a good margin in the background both of wealth and safety, and no need for miserliness or cowardice. There was a general readiness to accept new ideas, at least on trial. The wish to suppress them as 'dangerous to society' or 'unsettling to the mind' was considered futile. It was a little ridiculous, even, to be certain beforehand that they were wrong. It savoured of dogmatism, and dogmatism was highly unpopular.

At the back of all this liberality there was, no doubt, a great lack of exact thinking. Exact thinking leads to uncompromising conclusions, and the Victorian Age distrusted mathematical methods in practical matters. Much as we quarrelled with one another about such small matters as Home Rule for Ireland, or Employers' Liability, or Votes for Women, or Disestablishment, there was a profound fundamental concord, an approximate unanimity among reasonable educated people, about the fundamentals of life. We had an agreed cosmology: we accepted the nebular hypothesis and the doctrine of evolution. We even saw in it a vista of infinite hope for mankind, such as suited our general cheerfulness of outlook. We looked on Science as a liberator and benefactor. We had a generally agreed system of practical ethics: a muddled system no doubt, based chiefly on social stability and common sense, with a dash of Christian theory and a larger dash of the honour of a gentleman; of which one important characteristic was a firm conviction that however much you might condemn or regret a law you must not break it for your own advantage. In a similar spirit you might think the view of the ruling political party utterly wrong, but you must obey it until you had converted the majority. There was a general loosening of religious dogma, no doubt; but the movement implied no lowering of ethical standards. I saw lately a letter describing the impression made on the writer by five brilliant young men, all radicals and free-thinkers, whom he had met in Edinburgh in the early seventies, and ending with the phrase 'and not a vice among the

lot'. There was a great hubbub about the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to the House of Commons. But not only was most of the activity of that arch-atheist directed to philanthropic and educational causes in which many devout clergymen co-operated, but the general spirit of the time deprecated these fierce quarrels over points of dogma and settled down in a nation-wide acceptance of that admirable and illogical religion expressed in Mr. Cowper Temple's amendment to Forster's Education Bill. Education must not be divorced from religion, certainly not. There must be religious instruction, but it must teach no particular doctrine.

There was another faith more universal and more deeply and unquestioningly held than any of the above, because it really embraced the essence of all of them: a profound belief in the value and rightness of Western Civilization with its characteristic attributes—its faith in progress, its liberalized Christianity, its humanitarian ethics, its free democratic institutions, its common sense, its obedience to law, its triumphs of applied science, and its vast and ever-increasing wealth. To the men of my youth Western, and especially British, civilization was simply the right road of human progress: other civilizations, if one could call them civilizations at all, were just false roads or mistakes. The doctrine of Professor Toynbee in his great *Study of History*, that the world has seen some twenty-seven civilizations, each with its own customs, ethics, religion, art, and other characteristics, some perhaps a little more successful than others, but all equally transitory, would have seemed to us at that time perverse and almost frivolous. We could not take Hindu or Islamic or even Chinese civilization seriously as a competitor with that of the Liberal Christian West. Frederic Harrison, in a criticism of the nineteenth-century civilization, found in the end nothing worse about it than excessive complacency. He compared it to the virtuous, elegant, and talented nobleman in Voltaire's story whose insufferable self-conceit was eventually cured by the king

presenting him with a band of musicians who marched before him everywhere, singing:

Que de grâce! Que de valeur! Que son mérite est extrême!  
Ah, combien Monseigneur doit être content de lui-même!

One of the surest signs of our extreme faith in ourselves was the welcome which the age gave to destructive critics. All the famous critics of nineteenth-century civilization were destructive. The heavy-handed savageries of Carlyle were redeemed by his bursts of gigantic laughter; the irrational paradoxes of Ruskin by his eloquence and his infectious enthusiasm; but part of the fun in reading them was the fun of being absurdly attacked and denounced for a few possible flaws in a vast structure of unassailable worth. Later on the critics became more dangerous. Samuel Butler hit below the belt and had perhaps a slightly repellent touch of insanity. But when has Europe ever seen four writers of such immense popular influence as Tolstoy, Ibsen, Bernard Shaw, and H. G. Wells, whose activity was so predominantly critical, analytic, and destructive? One thinks of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot; but their range of influence was more limited. Some of these men are old friends of mine, others have been at least the objects of my worship. But they have all done a good deal of harm, for a reason that was not their fault. They hurled their satire against a structure which at the time seemed infinitely strong, and their words have lived on to weaken the credit of a system already dangerously shaken. The way in which they expected to be treated is shown by the Victorian, Broadbent, in *John Bull's Other Island*. When the inspired ex-priest, Keegan, denounces in burning words Broadbent's most cherished beliefs and practices, Broadbent only remarks, with unperturbed good temper: 'Too true, Mr. Keegan, too true. And most eloquently put. Reminds me of poor Ruskin.' The citadel stood so firm that hard words did no harm to it. The solid mass of reasonable Victorian optimism listened with amusement; and the assailants

themselves—from Carlyle and Ruskin to Tolstoy and Bernard Shaw—practically admitted by the paradoxical tone of their denunciations that they did not quite mean to be taken literally. One seemed to hear a laugh behind the thunder. Things were safe, and improving. And none of the critics seriously diagnosed the one real danger. They prophesied revolution, and all sorts of terrors which never came. But they did not see that the international anarchy of a world administered by some sixty sovereign independent states with no authority over them, admitting no reciprocal duties and nursing unlimited national ambitions, was a disease carrying the seeds of death. M. Seignobos, the French historian, wrote two articles in 1913 to explain that he considered a European war no longer a danger to be reckoned with. Mr. Brailsford said the same in his book *The War of Steel and Gold*, published in 1914. I am pretty sure I thought the same. The Cosmos, strong in self-confidence, vigorous in self-criticism, was not much troubled by thoughts of the precipice towards which it was actually moving.

Our Epimenides, let us suppose, fell asleep in 1878 or 1879, or better still in 1880 or 1881, just after Mr. Gladstone's Midlothian campaign had lifted the nation to its highest peak of confidence and idealism; let us waken him now, or better, perhaps, since he will need a year or two to look about him, let us have wakened him a year ago.

He will be dazzled, of course, by the change: the changes in dress, in the freer daily habits of life; the startling effects of the educational, social, and political emancipation of women; the democratization of the facilities of travel and of amusement; the amazing advances of applied science—the invention of the cinema, the radio, the internal-combustion engine, and that realization of the dream of ages, man's conquest of the air. He will be surprised by the intense vitality of a world which, after losing some 25 million lives<sup>1</sup> in the

<sup>1</sup> See Hersch, *La Mortalité causée par la Guerre Mondiale*.



War and the diseases which accompanied it, shows a considerably increased population: after losing incalculable masses of wealth in the same abyss is now richer than it ever was in actual wealth, and surpasses all dreams in its power of creating wealth. Human life is lengthening, public health improving, the death-rate falling. There is a constant creation of new records in speed, in endurance, in flights to the stratosphere, or dives to the deeps of ocean. Nor is the advance confined to material things. Pure science has advanced as much as applied science. Education is spreading to classes and even to nations which had little of it two generations ago. In western Europe and America at least the social services and organized charity have reached a higher development than ever before, and most people would agree that that sense of brotherhood or public duty which we roughly call the Social Conscience is more widespread and more sensitive than it was even in the nineteenth century. We in Oxford have ceased to be surprised when men and women with high honours in the Final Schools go off to work at a pittance for the W.E.A. or to teach philosophy to the unemployed. When the L.N.U. recently asked for voluntary workers to undertake the wearisome task of collecting signatures for the National Declaration, no less than 500,000 offered themselves. I doubt if there has ever been such a stirring of a national conscience.

All the symptoms seem favourable. They are much what the most sanguine radicals hoped for in the 'Century of Hope'. Yet there is something wrong. There is a loss of confidence, a loss of faith, an omnipresent, haunting fear. People speak, as they never spoke in Victorian days, of the possible collapse of civilization. Not merely philosophers: philosophers are always apt to indulge in speculations. Not merely agitators and cheap journalists: they would say anything. Prime Ministers speak of it, and consider that one more war in the West would do it. You may find one form of this feeling in Mr. Auden's clever extravaganza, *The Dance*

*of Death*, which shows the Social Order as a dancer stricken with a mortal disease, but kept going by stimulating delusions and noxious drugs, one after another, until he falls helpless, and all see that he was really dead before. At the other end of the scale the Pope, in a recent allocution, declares himself 'profoundly moved when he looks at the terrible crisis—economic, political, and in particular moral—which is torturing mankind, and considers the still more fatal consequences which are feared in the future'. But I need not labour the point. It is obvious that people now do discuss the imminence of a collapse of civilization, and in the nineteenth century they did not.

Of course, such discussion has the World War as its centre. I know at least one historian, for whose judgement I have great respect, who thinks that the present civilization has already received its mortal wound and cannot recover. Most would agree with Mr. Baldwin that we are recovering from the late War, but another of the same sort would finish us . . . particularly through bombing from the air. The friends of the Air Force have changed their tone lately. They used to boast of the irresistible powers of destruction which they and they alone possessed, until public opinion was roused and almost all the Delegates at the World Disarmament Conference supported schemes for the complete abolition of War from the Air. Now they are eagerly assuring us that they will not really do any particular harm: we have only to shut our windows, or, at most, get into a warm bath. I think this line of argument is not quite relevant, but I will return to the matter later on.

There is then this loss of faith, this sense, as the papal allocution puts it, of a 'tortured humanity and fear of still more fatal things in the future'. If we ask what form it takes no one answer is possible. But I am reminded of a long conversation I had in a foreign country with a young man whom I will not describe more closely. He was disillusioned. His great cry was against *idées wilsoniennes*—against constitu-

tional liberalism, internationalism, and the introduction of morality into politics. For a time, he said, he had been taken in by President Wilson: 'You told us to put faith in the Society of Nations, in the World Court of International Justice, in open diplomacy, in constitutional advance by parliamentary methods. We have tried them all. Why are we then so miserable? Is it not better to throw all that stuff to the winds and grab what we can? Do we not see in one country after another that not the man who obeys the law, but the man who draws his revolver first, is the man to rule? You taught us to believe in reason; you taught us that persecution can never be successful, and that Truth will in the end prevail. Now we see that reason can always be shouted down; that persecution succeeds perfectly, if only it is ruthless enough; that Truth can be completely suppressed and any convenient lie substituted, provided the people on top know their business. You told us that we ought to be honest and truthful; that we ought to hate cruelty and obscenity, though you never could show us why there was any "ought" about it. We have learnt since that private property is a fraud, and the rules of honesty only protections for a dishonest system; that truth is unattainable; that cruelty is after all the thing that pays, and that obscenity is rather fun. You taught us to listen with respect to people of knowledge and good character; and to disregard the pushing and ignorant; but we find that it is the pushing and ignorant who really matter. You told us there were laws of political economy, that trade was a mutual benefit to buyer and seller; honest commerce between nations a means towards mutual knowledge and mutual friendship; but apparently you were thinking of some imaginary world of reasonable human beings, and we find ourselves dealing with a quite different world. You talked to us of religion, as a thing hard to define but infinitely precious, to be felt rather than known, different from superstition and based on some distinction between the higher and lower parts of our being; but we know now that there is no

high and no low, there is nothing but the struggle for life, and no scale of values save in will-power and fighting-power. We have no use for a religion made up of Jewish father-worship and Christian defeatism. We prefer to worship ourselves, our group, and our leader.'

So far my memories of that young man, his age somewhere in the thirties. He came from a country which had undergone great sufferings, great oppressions; which, when its oppressors urged it to be reasonable, preferred to go mad. He might just as well have been a Communist but is, in fact, a Hitlerite. But I take him merely as one example of a widespread disorder. The Cosmos has gone, and gone on all sides. We had once a conception of the physical universe; it has broken down, and we have instead many discoveries, many varying conceptions, culminating in one which Einstein himself says is not perfectly intelligible and a theory which he regards as probably not correct. We had once an art which was enjoyed and admired by ordinary intelligent people; now we have school upon school, system upon system, of art—all transient, and each in its time enthusiastically admired by cliques of artists and up-to-date reviewers, while the ordinary intelligent man mostly remains sceptical or repelled. The great poets of the nineteenth century, like those of the Elizabethan Age or the Periclean, were loved and read by all who cared for poetry; the novelists were read and re-read with pleasure by all classes, and there were certain generally accepted principles, or at least traditions, by which art was judged. Now that is not so. There are constantly new schools, new experiments, and even new dogmatisms. The poets are proud of offending against all the *mores* of poetry, and profess to be pleased if nobody outside the clique enjoys their work. I am not attempting to say which is right and which is wrong; I only point out that there was once a Cosmos, and there is now a chaos. Along with the chaos there is naturally a profound unrest and a struggling vitality. But there is

also a strange despondency, as if our civilization were losing faith in itself.

What is it that has happened? It is no use scolding or lamenting the alleged depravity of the younger generation. It is no use saying that Western Civilization has received a mortal wound; or that everything is due to capitalism or to democracy, or that what we need is seventeen social revolutions in the seventeen chief countries of the world. If I look for a diagnosis I should find it chiefly in a comparison with many other cases where a community, faced suddenly with the necessity of great changes of habit and outlook, has not had the requisite flexibility or skill in adapting itself to meet them.

If I may take an extreme case, one of the most vivid memories of my childhood in Australia is of my father's constant effort to protect the aborigines in our neighbourhood from the dangerous contact of white men. Not merely from bad white men—the sort that gave them spirits, or poisoned food, or paid them pennies in place of half-crowns, but as far as possible from all white men. It would have been best, had it been possible, to shut out the influence of Western Civilization altogether and keep the tribe from being broken up. While the tribe held together, with all its totemic rules and taboos and elaborate religious ceremonies, it formed a *Cosmos*. It had its *mores*. The individuals lived on the whole a peaceful, law-abiding, and self-respecting life under rules which, though often to all appearance idiotic, were by no means particularly cruel. When individuals or groups were sucked into the eddies of civilized life the change was too much, the strain too great; the world had become unintelligible, and no *mores*, no settled rules of conduct, remained. If you look at the portraits of Australian aborigines in the South Kensington Museum or elsewhere, you will see on almost every face a frowning look of fear and bewilderment, the look of human beings not merely beaten in the struggle of life but beaten by forces they can neither resist nor understand.

It is not, of course, only the bad side of a new and overpowering civilization that does harm. The use of coined money, for instance, is in itself a great and harmless convenience. But coming suddenly to a tribe where wealth is normally reckoned in yams or manioc or even cattle it makes a dangerous upset. Monogamy is a higher social custom than polygamy. Yet the sudden introduction of it in Uganda has caused much suffering and injustice, and in the Trobriands Malinowski says that the situation has only been saved by the natives' chivalrous adherence to their old rules. Even the introduction of Christianity to a pagan tribe is a dangerous thing. I do not for a moment support the average trader's attacks upon missionaries and mission schools. Very emphatically the reverse. But often the main effect of conversion on a native's religious belief is to teach him to disbelieve and despise a hundred little present and living sanctities of daily life—sacred rites, sacred places, sacred prohibitions—which gave an ordered frame and pattern to his conduct, and in return to tell him of other sanctities, higher, of course, but far away and long ago, and often a little difficult to his comprehension. In cases of this sort the adaptation is too difficult. No communities and few individuals succeed in it. They lose the *mores* that held together their old life, though they keep all sorts of old habits and beliefs which are inconsistent with the new one.

The most successful adaptation in modern times has been that of Japan; successful, that is, as far as material strength and national self-respect are concerned. Whether the old chivalrous and artistic Japan was really a less high development than the present industrial and militarist Japan is a problem we can leave undiscussed. The present attempt of Russia to absorb Western industrialism, like its previous Europeanization under Peter the Great, may be taken as showing how much can be done in the way of forcible adaptation, and what a terrible price the adaptation may exact.

But, of course, a similar problem has occurred again and

again in history, generally perhaps under the impact of a foreign invading culture, but sometimes, as in Europe to-day, under the mere influence of new circumstances.

Greek civilization in the fifth century B.C. was emphatically a Cosmos. It accepted the threefold duty of man to his parents, his city, and his gods: a tradition of art and literature universally loved and respected; a philosophy, or pursuit of knowledge, which, with all its internal differences, moved mostly within agreed boundaries. In the Hellenistic Age the City had failed, it could not stand against Zeno's criticism nor against Alexander's armies; and its religion had failed with it. Vast accumulations of capital deranged economic life; military autocracies made meaningless the duties of the good citizen; the terrific growth of the slave trade under Roman direction destroyed the prospects of the free worker. Cosmos, in a dozen different ways, had turned into chaos; and the way in which the Hellenistic Age reacted against this chaos is a very remarkable piece of history. The Greeks did it by free adaptation and permeation. The Jews did it by a carefully measured dose of adaptation and a heroic maximum of resistance. Zion might be taken from them, but they still kept 'the Holy One and his Law'. There were similar problems, not in the main due to the impact of any foreign culture, at the Renaissance; at the first arrival of the Nabobs in England, with their disturbing control of vast quantities of easily disposable wealth; in the long turmoil of the industrial revolution; in the unparalleled opportunities for concentrated economic power offered by the control of railways, of iron, and of oil in America.

Our own chaos seems to me to be the result of a similar impact of sudden and multifarious changes, striking us, most unfortunately, at a time when the people of many nations are half-mad with suffering, and all of us still staggering under the shock of the World War.

Think in how many ways the habits of daily life have changed during the slumber of our Epimenides. The most

obvious, of course, is the change in locomotion. Before he fell asleep the fastest thing on the roads was an occasional trotting dog-cart, doing about 12½ m.p.h. Now the roads are crowded with vehicles, increasing in number at the rate of 600 a week, and capable of 60 or 70 m.p.h., though in certain regions confined to 30 (1,400 cars passed Carfax between 2.0 and 3.0 p.m. on 21 July 1933). The change here was obvious and material; the necessity of adapting ourselves was clear, the only question was whether we could do it. And clearly we are adapting ourselves, just as the London sparrows are. Very few sparrows, I am informed, now get themselves run over by motors; and though 238,000 of us failed to get out of the way in time last year, the number of escapes this year is very much higher. In the first three months of 1935 road accidents were 28,000 less than in the same period of 1934. When we once make up our minds to the adaptation we can adapt ourselves. (Though I would ask you to note in passing, as a matter of psychological interest, that the enthusiastic motorist generally resists every restriction; not because he really likes maiming and killing his fellow creatures, but because he is entirely wrapped up in the pleasure of playing with his toy.)

But there are more silent changes to which we make little conscious response. Compare our present diet, in its rich abundance of exotic foods, stimulants, sedatives, and narcotics, varied beyond anything the human race has ever known, with that of our great-grandfathers, who mostly lived on the produce of their own soil. Shall we adapt ourselves to that change? Will it do us good? Or will our grandchildren marvel even more than we at the beautiful hair and teeth of the people of Tristan da Cunha on their diet of almost unmitigated fish and potatoes?

Then, are we adapting ourselves too slowly, or far, far too rapidly, to the world-wide process of vulgarization which results from modern mass-production? The greatest disseminator of ideas to-day is the cinema. It alone overleaps



the boundaries of nationality, language, and colour. It is expensive to produce; and the film that will appeal to the minimum human intellect will drive out of the market the film that needs some thought or culture for its appreciation. A film which had, *mutatis mutandis*, as high an intellectual quality as *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* or *The Bacchae* would not have a dog's chance in the open market. Consequently the people who would appreciate the higher style have to content themselves with the lower style, and gradually but inevitably are influenced by it. In the theatre there is much the same problem; but there most European nations have found a remedy in endowed theatres, and in England we are at least conscious of the danger and groping after a response.

The same danger is not much less acute in the Press. Since the finance of the paper depends on advertisements and advertisements depend on circulation, a paper to be successful has to suit itself to the tired or lazy-minded millions who know little and think less, and will not attend to anything without what Wordsworth calls 'some outrageous stimulation'. Only by special resources and special qualities in its management can a paper which appeals to intelligent people be kept alive. We are not yet even attempting to meet this danger.

Nor are we meeting a more acute danger which results from the first. Mass-production and vulgarization imply great accumulations of capital in particular hands; and not mere capital, like that of a railroad or a chain-store, but capital which lives and makes its profits by the manipulation of news and the leading or misleading of opinion. If one reads the life of C. P. Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, or that of Mr. Buckle of *The Times*, and then reflects on the activities of Mr. Hearst in America and some of our press barons in England, one's heart sinks. Beyond any doubt there is here a challenge to our civilization.

Take again the changes wrought by inventions of machinery and systems of rationalization. It is not a new problem.

Unemployment caused by improved machinery is one of the oldest troubles of the industrial age. But the advance has been of late years incredibly rapid. If I remember rightly, Mr. Butler, the head of the I.L.O., has reported that there are in the United States eleven boot and shoe factories, any two of which could, if worked at full time, produce all the boots and shoes needed in the world. But this problem, if not being solved, is at least being consciously faced and considered.

There is another change cutting deep into our most sacred ancestral taboos, I mean those relating to sex. Nothing else, perhaps, cuts quite so deep. The emancipation of women, political, social, and educational, has made a very profound and widespread change in British and west European life; and one part of it has been the breaking of a number of traditions, some of them no doubt best broken, but some probably very valuable, which belonged to the time when women's property, like women themselves, belonged to their husbands or fathers. A young woman earning her own livelihood in the industrial world is sure to do what she likes far more than one who lives at home under the eyes of her parents, and sure sometimes to like things which they would not like. Nor can we possibly forget that the widespread knowledge of comparatively harmless contraceptives not only makes loose behaviour less easy to detect, but alters the very nature of sexual relations themselves. Here are a whole host of new problems, intimately affecting the social life of millions of people, which will some day have to be faced and understood. My own belief is that the movement which created them will also, if we are patient, solve them. At present they are left in mere confusion.

Plain economic facts affect immediately the lives of millions. Changes in thought or in science act at first only on the intellectuals, but they may well, in the long run, have very wide effects indeed. I think no one can doubt that the progress made by philosophy in the last fifty years has been,

to a great extent, a move from order to disorder—from a perhaps illusory Cosmos to something more critical, no doubt, but more chaotic. The old progressive Victorian outlook on life, shaped partly by Christian tradition, partly by J. S. Mill and the Utilitarians, was in some ways inadequate. But it seemed intelligible; it was a real guide to life. It taught men to search for truth, to care for the unfortunate, to think little of worldly gains, and to oppose a relentless resistance to oppression. But the whole conception of human nature on which it was based has received of late a formidable shock. It reminds me of the shock delivered to mediæval theology by the discoveries of Copernicus. If the earth was not the centre of the solar system, if man was not the centre of the universe, all mediæval religious ideas seemed to fall in ruins. A similar shock has been administered to the present generation by the discoveries—if they are discoveries—of psychologists of the Freudian school. They have not only familiarized us with a host of nasty elements in our normal subconscious make-up, elements which most people had either not conceived at all or at least had suppressed as things of no value or importance; they have also analysed our best aspirations and ideals with utterly disintegrating effect. Do we try to improve slaughter-houses or to prevent the ill treatment of animals: our real motive, according to these new teachers, is only a disguised love of cruelty and a pleasure in thinking about it. An aspiration after chastity may be only disguised lechery; and every form of moral effort an injurious repression of the *libido*. It does not matter for my argument whether this new psychology is true or false or—as I should guess most likely—if it contains 10 per cent. of important discovery encased in 90 per cent. of confused hariolation; it is there, it is all about us, and it makes its disintegrating impact. It is worth remarking that a good many psychoanalysts, having destroyed the reasonable moral aspect of life, tend towards one form or another of superstition. They cannot face the naked horror of the world they have made.

Amid all these disintegrating and bewildering influences I should have little doubt that our Western Civilization, with the impetus of its old tradition as well as its present vitality, could easily recover its equilibrium, were it not for one particular danger. To all these others, and largely as a cause of all these others, we have to add the World War. I am no pure pacifist. I set no exaggerated value on human life. I do not see how you can put an end to war by running away from it. But I am convinced that, considering the delicate and complex structure of the modern world, the shrinkage of distances produced by our modern powers of locomotion, the terrific forces of destruction controlled by modern science, and the unprecedented power of modern governments to extract from their peoples the whole sum of their fighting strength, that war, which up to a century ago offered possible advantages to the victor and seldom inflicted irreparable damage on the vanquished, has now become incompatible with the continuance of civilized society. I agree with Lord Grey that 'we must learn or perish'; with Lord Bryce that 'we must end war or war will end us'; with Mr. Baldwin . . . but why should I go on quoting? The thing is a commonplace.

I am not thinking specially of the direct destruction of life and property involved in the actual fighting. I see that Lord Mottistone thinks there is much to be said for another but 'more gentlemanly' war; that Professor Haldane has been assuring the National Union of Students that we could at a pinch, by adopting troglodyte habits and exercising suitable economy in non-military matters, stand two or three or more wars rather worse than the last. These attractive forecasts seem to me rather sanguine, but I am not competent to criticize them.

Already it is the economic consequences of the late war that have come most vividly home to millions of people in their daily lives. The consequences last long after the killing stops: the dislocation and maladjustment which in Russia

and China have made millions starve to death while in Canada people were burning wheat to keep the price up and in England throwing herrings back into the sea; the mutual suspicion and fear which are making every nation try to sell more than it buys, and to save its own trade by wrecking that of its neighbours. But I am not thinking chiefly even of that. There is something deeper.

It will take society a long time to get over the effects of those four interminable years during which whole nations concentrated their energies, aspirations, ideals, delights on the infliction of death, mutilation, famine, and misery. Of course such concentration of energy implied much self-sacrifice and sometimes extraordinary heroism. Our much-decried industrial society showed itself capable of both. But in the main, for four years of intense feeling, the moral ideas of western Europe were turned topsy-turvy. What had been most evil became good, and good evil. When General Sherman said 'War is Hell' he did not merely mean that it was a state of suffering. He meant that in war, as in Hell, energy is devoted to the infliction of evil. He showed his meaning in his famous reply about the treatment of the women and children in the conquered country: 'Leave them nothing but their eyes to weep with.' I am not thinking of individual atrocities or excesses; only of the orthodox rules, as written, for example, in the war book of Clausewitz. In the Polish famine of 1917, for example, when the roads of Poland were strewn with the dead bodies of women and children, the Americans offered to import food to the Poles as they had to the Belgians, with an organization to see that none of the food went to Germany. The Germans agreed. But our War Office pointed out that a starving population in the conquered territory was an embarrassment to the enemy and therefore an advantage to us; even if the Germans did not actually seize the American food they would be able to take more of the Polish-grown food; so we vetoed any importation of food. No doubt the War Office, by War

Office standards, was right. War is Hell, and that is the sort of thing you do when you live under the laws of Hell.

I am not thinking of individual atrocities; yet must we not give them also a moment's thought, since they too are symptoms? Every older man here will remember not merely the indignation, but the shock of incredulous astonishment, with which during the War we first heard of these things. The men who did them, we explained, must be mad. The nation that did them must be savage beyond all others. But gradually we found, as the War went on, that no nation stood alone. One after another was added to the black list of the inhuman, and that insane streak still remains in the post-war world long after the actual War has ended.

It is partly the direct result of the War. The only response of helpless people to prolonged and intolerable suffering is to go mad. The sufferings of the peoples, so far as one dares to measure such things, have perhaps been worst in China, in Russia, in the defeated nations of Central Europe. And it is there that the response has been most violent. To take one trifling illustration: what difficulty we Oxford teachers used to have in understanding, or explaining to pupils, the worship of Alexandrian kings or Roman emperors as 'Gods Saviours' or 'Gods Manifest'. Yet now we have thousands, and hundreds of thousands, worshipping at the tombs of their Saviours Lenin and Sun-Ya-Tsen; we have Mr. Hitler, in his actual lifetime, proclaimed to German schoolchildren as 'the elder brother of Christ'. I will not multiply instances. Oppression does drive people mad.

But the form of the madness needs some explanation too. And on this point I think we may listen to Jung and other psychologists who have observed that one effect of the World War was to liberate and set loose, free of control or censorship, those multitudes of insane and perverted impulses, incompatible with civilized social life, which lurk, they tell us, as possibilities in the dark places of human nature, but are normally not permitted to bear fruit in action or even to rise

above the threshold of consciousness. This is a subject for experts in psychology. But it is certainly striking to see in post-war writings the immense increase of words denoting various kinds of moral and psychological perversion—from 'sadism' and 'masochism' to 'pyromania'—words of which we Victorians made little use because, as far as we knew, we had little occasion for them. Partly, no doubt, so the psychologists tell us, this is due to a loosening of repressions and a greater desire to call a spade a spade; but largely also to the fact that these particular spades have grown far more numerous. War is Hell; it justifies all evil that will injure the enemy. It stimulates the imagination of evil; it destroys in one large field all moral censorship. Its ultimate law, 'Kill or be killed', is in precise terms the exact opposite of civilization. And in the service of this law, it admits no compromise. War, when it comes, demands all we have; and so, though more gradually, does the fear of war.

My conclusion then is, now that the danger is known and staring us in the face, that all our other uncertainties depend on one great unanswered problem: Can our Western Civilization make the effort necessary to get rid of war or can it not? If it can, it will live; if it cannot, like a drug-addict who cannot do without his cocaine, like a victim of nicotine poisoning who cannot give up his tobacco, like a confirmed thief who cannot keep himself from stealing, it is doomed.

Let me explain by an example. I look back at the things that I and my colleagues in the L.N.U. have been saying with tedious iteration since 1932: 'Either the Allies must reduce their armaments or Germany will certainly increase hers.' 'Either armaments must be limited or else they will be unlimited, and that means a race in armaments.' These were truisms. All the League of Nations Societies throughout Europe were repeating them. Every government represented at the Disarmament Conference accepted them. Yet the Allies have not disarmed; Germany has rearmed.

Armaments are unlimited, and the race has begun . . . which nobody wanted.

Was the problem too difficult? Not a bit of it. Some years of study in the Preparatory Commission had produced a scheme—the scheme of Qualitative Disarmament—which was, apart from small differences of detail, accepted as effective. The intellectual and technical difficulties were in due course overcome, and, as Sir John Simon himself said, ‘only the political difficulties remained’. Yet the Conference has failed!

Its success was a vital interest of civilization. All students of the subject were agreed on that. Every nation wanted it. All the churches wanted it. The 8 million ex-service-men, ex-allies and ex-enemies together, sent most moving deputations demanding it. Yet it failed. The direct conscious opposition was not formidable: some great armament firms, through agents like Mr. Shearer; some great newspapers like those bought for the occasion by the Comité des Forges; some enthusiastic soldiers, sailors, and especially airmen, who, like the motorists we spoke of just now, could not bear to have their most expensive toys taken from them. Yet the Conference failed. The drug-addict could not break his habit. Civilization could not save itself.

The way forward is still open. I see in it only one serious, irremovable obstacle: our old friend, the sovereign independent state. In all countries—dictatorships as well as democracies—governments depend for their existence not on the goodwill of the world, but on the favour of their own countrymen. Consequently whenever the desires of some particular country run counter to the good of the world the statesmen who represent that country have a dangerous choice. If they choose the welfare of the world they may well be turned out of office by their own people; if they want to stay in power they are tempted to vote against the welfare of the world. For the goodwill of foreign nations is no help to them.



That is the flaw in the machinery; but heaven help us if we delay working for peace till the machine is made perfect! Nearly all the good work of the world is done with imperfect machinery, by men whose wisdom and goodwill are able to make it work all the same.

Can we or can we not get rid of war? I mean, not merely stave it off for another five years or ten years, but make it as nearly an impossibility between the nations of Europe as it is now between the United States and Canada; a disaster so remote that the fear of it is not constantly present in our thoughts, distorting our policies, ruining our economics, wrecking our social services, and ultimately dragging down our whole ethical and intellectual life? If we can, I am not much afraid of the other dangers. The attainment of security and disarmament, and the welding of the civilized nations into a real Society, will not only solve our chief economic and financial problems, and make all our conditions of life infinitely easier, but the successful achievement of that one fundamental readjustment will, I hope, give us confidence and courage in facing the other readjustments.

There is no need to indulge in dreams of a millennium, but a better life for mankind is never a thing utterly out of reach. Our generation, if once it can emerge from its present chaos, has abundant wealth, and superabundant power of creating wealth. It has immense vitality; a triumphantly advancing intellect; a social conscience and a desire for service as keen and sensitive as have ever been. And what denouncer of present-day England has not somewhat changed his outlook after seeing the recent Jubilee rejoicings in London? Hundreds of thousands of people merry-making in the streets and parks all night, utterly beyond the control of any police; yet no disorder in the streets, not a flower-bed in Hyde Park trampled! There is something new here in our social development, a ground for hope which we had not realized.

It is a tremendous issue; an issue fraught with consequences

for good or evil as momentous as any in human history. And it is a contest in which every individual can take part, for the outcome depends ultimately on the state of mind of whole nations. Many eminent men say that it needs a change of heart in all the peoples of Europe. I somewhat shrink from so strong a phrase. I do not believe that our exceptional perils and difficulties are due to any exceptional wickedness or hardness of heart in this generation: I think they are due to historical causes, and that our generation, battered and bewildered as it is, but not corrupt, not utterly hard-hearted, is called under pain of death to face a more searching ordeal and make a more clear-cut choice than has often fallen to the lot of men. By the decisions of the next few years the battle of civilization will be lost or won. It was far easier to win in 1925; it was a good deal easier in 1932. But we are now so near the edge of the precipice that, though the task is harder, we can summon greater reserves of will to master it.

If this problem is once solved we can turn with good courage to thinking out the rest of the chaos. A great French historian once said to me that England had now in front of her some five problems, each one of which might be enough to wreck an average nation; 'but England', he said with a smile, 'will probably overcome them all'.

I think this is true. And I believe no social order ever failed unless it had lost confidence in its vitality, its value to human beings, and its right to live. I am surprised that an age so vital as our own should think of losing heart. There is much wild denunciation of the existing order. But I confess that, as I look through the record of history, I can see hardly any civilization which can at all bear comparison with that of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in western Europe . . . yes, even the twentieth, with its appalling record of disaster, redeemed, if not by its blundering heroism, at least by its profound sense of sin. We have received from the past a stupendous heritage, intellectual and spiritual as well as material. We are the heirs of the Parthenon and the *Oresteia*,

of the *Republic* and the thirteenth chapter of Corinthians, of St. Francis and Shakespeare and Rembrandt, as well as the great discoverers and rulers and men of science. The social structure of Europe, or even of this country alone, is too vast a whole for any man to judge; but if a man of middle age takes that particular part of it which he knows best he will generally have to admit that it has on the whole improved since he first knew it, and improved vastly on what it seems to have been a century or two ago. There are two main tests which one can apply to a social order: first how far it protects the weak, reduces human suffering, and encourages a spirit of goodwill in daily life; and secondly what heights it reaches or is capable of reaching in the things of the intellect and the spirit. Our age comes very high indeed in the first, and surely high also in the second—an age of magnificent achievement, of far more magnificent possibilities, though threatened by grave dangers and with deep-rooted flaws to be overcome. I am an old man. My battles may be mostly over. But to any young man or woman here who may think despondently about the world or feel wasted and unwanted in the economic scheme of things, I would venture to say that, grim and grinding as the present seems, there lies before them the outline of a great crusade, the prospect of a heroic future. Be ready. Face your problems, and even your wrongs, with reason and not with rage. See that the mere indulgences of sense get no hold upon you. Resolve that the powers of the world shall neither intimidate nor bribe you. Be ready, as every common soldier is ready, to use or give up your life for something that is more precious than life; and you will, in all likelihood, play your part in one of the greatest movements of human history. Not, of course, in most cases, a resounding or conspicuous part; but who would not be proud to have been an unknown camp-attendant at the battle of Marathon or to have thrown his garment under the ass's feet when Christ entered Jerusalem?

### III

#### THE CULT OF VIOLENCE (1934)

*1908 and 1934: The Social Order , ~*

THIS is not the first time that I have had the pleasure of giving the Inaugural Address of the session at Aberystwyth. I gave to your predecessors in the year 1908 an address entitled 'Wherewith Shall it be Salted?' implying—perhaps with more tact than modesty—that you and, to some degree, I myself were the salt of the earth, and then spoiling it all by suggesting that possibly we had both lost our savour. The substance of my remarks was an appeal to the social class, both men and women, represented by the new and more democratic universities, to feel their powers and their responsibilities of leadership in carrying forward the great march of social and intellectual progress which had been, throughout most of the western world, the glory of the nineteenth century. My purview then was, practically speaking, confined to Great Britain. My outlook was entirely an outlook of hope, with no suggestion of fear or insecurity, no thought of the possibility of war or downfall.

That was in 1908, just twenty-five years ago. In anything that I can honestly say to you now—and unless I speak sincerely why should I speak or you listen?—I am bound in the first place to look far beyond the boundaries of Great Britain to that great world community which is now in the agonies of birth, and in the second place to contemplate a future not necessarily dark, but certainly not secure in the promise of progress or continued prosperity. War and revolution, so far from being remote possibilities which can for practical purposes be left out of account, are now the commonplaces of our thought. Our civilization itself which, when I spoke here last, seemed a thing of unquestioned permanence and sure progress, is now known to be in danger of utter collapse. The late Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, by no means a man given

to extravagant fancies, has said in so many words: 'Who does not know that, one more war in the west, and the civilization of the ages will fall with as great a crash as that of Rome?'

Well, what are you and I going to do about it? I know what I mean to do, or to go on doing; but your actions will be more important inasmuch as you will last longer.

What do we mean, or what did Mr. Baldwin mean by 'the civilization of the ages'? The present state of things; 'not', you will say, 'a very perfect state of Society'. No, but people are always apt to undervalue what they already possess, and they forget the long and heroic struggles on which their civilization is built. In the period round about 1908 we had reached in this country a higher standard of livelihood than had ever been known before, better food, clothing, and housing; more widespread education; more humanity; more justice; more leisure and amusement for rich and poor. Our ancestors had by centuries of struggle abolished, at least among the peoples who shared in this Western Civilization, innumerable evils which had through most of history been regarded as the ordinary attributes of human life. It is not a slight thing that men and women are no longer liable to be sold as slaves, or burned alive as witches or heretics; that medicine has become a form of science and not of magic; that lunatics are no longer flogged to drive the devils out of them. Gladiatorial sports and public executions have long been abolished. The reign of law is established throughout the land, there is no need to go about armed; in a trial at law the evidence is sifted by cross-examination, in place of the older plan of torturing all the accused persons to see who confesses first. Women are actually allowed to own property; their earnings no longer belong automatically to the nearest male. They are even allowed to have education and exercise professions. The eyes, teeth, and general health of children have become a sacred trust to the State. Animals are protected by law from

cruelty. Last, and perhaps most extraordinary, when people are out of work or otherwise incapable of supporting themselves, the rest of us, by a series of measures, from the old Poor Law to the present Unemployment Benefit, undertake to support them. In earlier days such people were just allowed to starve, as they are at present, or have been till lately, in Russia and China. Do not imagine that these fruits of civilization are unimportant or were won without a struggle. Do not imagine either that they are automatically safe and secure.

One could go on much longer describing what is meant or implied by civilization. I have only mentioned some obvious advances that had been made by the beginning of the century. And you might notice in passing the utter falsity of the common statement that no great reform is ever won except by violence. With the exception of certain elements in the higher standard of living, which were won by strikes, not a single one of the great advances I have detailed came by violence; they came by persuasion, by reason, by education, by a gradual raising of moral and intellectual habits. Violence can never build, it can only destroy.

We enjoy now, in almost all respects, the same civilization as in 1908; what is the change that has taken place since that time and made our outlook on the future so different? Let me try to put it briefly. There was one fatal flaw in the civilization of the pre-War world. While economically, socially, and in many other ways it was becoming more and more of a unity, this unity had no organ of government, no organ even of consultation. It was managed by some sixty sovereign independent states, all thinking and acting separately, each intent purely on its own interest and regarding its neighbours either as prospective enemies or as prospective allies against a common enemy. Consequence—the World War! A world in which there was so much inter-communication, so much clashing of interests, so much

mutual trespass, but no organ of government or consultation, was bound to come to a crash.]

After the terrific shock of the War came another shock, ultimately due to the same cause. The international anarchy which had produced the War was brought to an end, or greatly reduced, in political matters by the establishment of the League of Nations, but in economic matters the anarchy still continued. The economic anarchy, in which all the nations tried to grab one another's markets and destroy one another's trade, resulted in the present crisis, with its tale of some 30 millions unemployed supported by public money in the more prosperous states, in addition to at least 10 millions more starved to death in recent years in Russia and China.

These two shocks have produced, naturally enough, several revolutions and much demoralization and despair. Hence the awful doubt whether our civilization can weather the storm, or whether there is already the writing on the wall. For myself, I am sure we can weather the storm if we keep our heads, yielding neither to despair, nor yet to the inner demoralization which is a natural result of this long strain of suffering and waste and disappointment. But of that later.

For the moment I want to call your attention to some of the effects which seem to me, with my pre-War education and habits of thinking, to have been produced by the War. In the first place I am reminded of a story of Tolstoy's about a Russian peasant who is conscripted and taken to the war and there learns how easy a thing it is to kill another human being, how useful at times, and how free from unpleasant consequences. Doings which to my generation were unheard-of and fantastic horrors became during the War everyday affairs, till we found, as Shakespeare puts it: 'All pity choked with custom of fell deeds.' In my first years as a Delegate for South Africa at the League Assembly it sometimes fell to me to see some of the unfortunate creatures whom the more important British representatives had no time to see. One would find them waiting patiently in the hall, Armenians,

Georgians, Ukrainians, Macedonians, waiting to tell one quietly and, as it seemed, almost without emotion, their terrible stories of massacre and torture. I will not repeat them: the League did what it could to restore quiet and order, and one was left reflecting, as one of the British ministers said to me, that man is a more cruel beast than one had ever dreamed.

Murder became after the War, and continues to be, almost a regular method of politics. One is perhaps not much surprised at it in India or in Egypt. But the example was set by Ireland, where it became an acknowledged item of the revolutionary programme to murder at least one Englishman a day; and the programme succeeded! In Germany not merely extremists like Liebknecht, but Erzberger, Rathenau, and other less prominent Liberal leaders in turn, were murdered, down to Stresemann, and Stresemann's life was attempted more than once. To-day the murder and torture of political opponents are the commonplaces of governments both in Germany and Russia. Such actions are not wild protests against intolerable oppression as murder often was in Czarist times, but deliberate acts of cruelty towards opponents who are helpless. And the murderers are rewarded and promoted. A member of the Italian secret police has recently boasted of his numerous killings. Japan is scarcely within the fringe of civilization, or at best is a very new arrival there, but the individual murders of statesmen by the present ruling gang some months ago was over fifty, and must now be much more; one of the most notorious murderers was made head of the police in Manchuria, and the terrorists recently on trial seem to have become the idols of the people.

There is a change here, a failure of civilization. This is not the sort of thing that was done before the War. True, the habit of murder has generally been an accompaniment of revolution, but revolution itself is a failure of civilization, and the murder habit is a part of the failure. Revolution only comes when some social order has become so oppressive that



its victims rise and destroy it, or else so weak that it collapses from its own incompetence. And I think you will find that those victims always show themselves true children of the bad government which they overthrew: as it was stupid they are stupid, as it was cruel they are cruel too. Every revolution is a condemnation of the government which it destroys, and the atrocities of the revolution are a witness to the sort of human beast which the old government tended to produce.

It is instructive to notice what countries in Europe have collapsed in revolution and what have resisted. Curiously enough people hardly seem to have noticed the point or drawn the obvious conclusion. Almost all countries have collapsed except those which possess well-rooted parliamentary institutions and have had the self-mastery and common sense to know how to use them. Russia, the central hearth of utter misgovernment, has gone first and farthest. Italy, which never had a real parliament or free institutions, and was always much subject to secret societies, has fallen, true to type. Germany by the excesses of the present régime shows the brutality produced by the despotism of the old empire. Spain and Greece have had their revolutions and recovered, Greece to be a steadying and civilizing force in the Near East, Spain to become—and, one may still hope, to remain—one of the political leaders of Europe.<sup>1</sup> But through all the storm and stress the old parliamentary countries have remained unshaken: Great Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland. They have had, roughly speaking, much the same difficulties to face as the other countries, but they have kept their heads, respected the laws, and not plunged into crime.

Perhaps a section among you will protest that I am lumping all these revolutions together as failures and disasters, whereas some are and some are not. One section will say that, while nothing can exceed the horrors of Bolshevism, in

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the restoration of the republic after the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera.

Italy the trains are punctual, the budget is not known to be near bankruptcy, and only some few thousands of the finest people are in prison without a cause. (I may remark in passing that last year I waited for an important Italian train which was seven hours late; but that by the way.) Others will join in disapproval of the Fascist suppression of liberty, but will insist that, if you overlook the local famines, the smouldering civil war between the Government and the whole peasant population, and the occasional shooting of innocent members of the old bourgeois class in batches in order to find scapegoats for the failures of the Government, the Communist régime in Russia is a model for all to follow.

I will say quite frankly what I think. Let me borrow the words which a Greek lady of my acquaintance ventured to use to General Plastiras when he set up his brief despotic revolution in Greece. He explained to her with enthusiasm his methods, his organization, his lying propaganda, the ruthlessness with which he intended to put to death all who stood in his way. It was just about Easter-time, and she, containing her indignation, replied: 'I think, General, you have forgotten one thing, that Christ is risen.'

Put metaphorically, that is exactly what they all forget, these preachers and practisers of terrorism, who promise utopias and bring instead a world of hatred and crime. Perhaps I am more disillusioned than most of you are or ought to be, but for my part I care comparatively little what ultimate principle—I had almost said, what idiotic principle—a revolutionist professes; whether it be the divine right of kings, or the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the inherent superiority of the speaker's own race or nation to all other races and nations, or the necessity of silencing all who differ from him so that the whole nation may speak with one voice: if he proceeds to seek his end by crime and perfidy I am against him. There is a curious little story in one of the letters of that remarkable woman, Mary Wollstonecraft. She was in Paris at the time of the French Revolution, walking

with an English friend, and expatiating with enthusiasm on the reign of humanity and love which the Jacobins were introducing to the world, when she slipped and fell in the blood that was flowing from the guillotine. It had trickled quite a long way over the cobbles.

‘Does that mean’, you will perhaps indignantly ask, ‘that I am against the French Revolution? That I do not see the plain fact that a revolution was necessary, and that the state of France was better after the revolution than before?’ No. I see all that; but I am against bestial crime and cruelty whoever commits it. And I believe a historian could trace in the later history of France the bad effects resulting from the crimes of the revolution, just as in those crimes themselves you may see the bad effects of the wickedness and corruption of the old régime.

A Russian social-democrat who came to Geneva on an economic mission was delicately approached by certain friends of mine who had grown intimate with him, and asked whether on the whole he was happier under the Czar or under the Bolsheviks. He replied by rolling up his shirt sleeves. ‘I am a very disinterested critic’, he said. ‘These scars were made by fetters in the Czar’s time, these others by the present people. If I took off my shirt you could distinguish the scourge marks made by the old government from those made by the new. . . . On the whole’, he continued, ‘I am happier now, but then you must remember I have a job, and am not a peasant.’ Probably all Communists and many non-Communists would agree with him, in being happier now. So much the better. But I read Lenin’s own writing, and see the cold advocacy of what he calls ‘Mass Terror’—espionage, blackmail, flogging, torture moral and physical, hideous forms of death directed against utterly innocent people, not one by one, but by thousands—and I do not believe that a system founded on ‘Mass Terror’ can produce a good life for mankind. I recognize gladly that many interesting efforts are being made now for real social advance.

The peasantry, utterly uneducated before, are provided with not what I should call a wholesome education, but still education. Districts where the children are particularly demoralized are conscientiously furnished with special 'anti-God' schools to improve their morals. There is much enthusiasm, much real devotion. But the poison is not so easily eliminated from a social system. If you read the sympathetic accounts of present-day Russia you will not only find evidence of horrible and widespread sufferings inflicted on innocent people, you will find also among the dominant class, the Communists, a continual praise of 'Ruthlessness'. 'Ruthlessness', the denial of sympathy, the denial of the brotherhood of man, the claim that will justify every wickedness which the insane mind of a fanatic can conceive.

Is it not much the same in Germany? There is certainly the same praise of ruthlessness—and even of *Brutalität*—reminding one of the enthusiasm for *Schrecklichkeit*, 'Frightfulness', which so stirred the indignant laughter of Europe during the War. Five men at Beuthen drag one man out of bed and murder him; should they be punished? No, they are brave men, true Germans, followers of Odin and the Swastika. He was a Communist and deserved death. 'But to kill him in that way—by stamping with nailed boots on his face and neck!' 'Ah! that is *Brutalität*! That is the stuff we want.' 'And before the eyes of his mother!' 'Yes; women must be taught a lesson. . . .' What is this? How can a nation, a great and civilized nation, be so transformed? Is it a mass madness? Yes; and a well-known historic form. Not essentially different from the madness that led to the great religious persecutions, to the Armenian massacres; the madness which exalts the interests or the beliefs of one group of people so high as to override all the normal moral and intellectual values, and so shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

Am I flogging a dead horse, and attacking a trend of political emotion which no one here will defend? I wish I

could think so. The fanaticism of which I speak is dominant in three great countries, among German Nazis, Russian Bolsheviks, Japanese militarists. A lighter and perhaps more cynical form is strong in Italy. It has been preached with success in Ireland, it is being preached among the extremists in India, and among certain Fascist and Communist circles, happily for the present unimportant, in England and France. And the chief danger is that such fanaticism tends always to breed a contrary fanaticism; violence begets violence. If Catholics think it right to burn Protestants, Protestants will soon think it necessary and wise to burn Catholics. If Communists advocate mass murder of the capitalists and bourgeois, the capitalists and bourgeois will propose the extermination of Communists.

Indeed, the great danger of this cult of violence is that it leads to the extinction of reasonable thought and of conscientious and kindly human beings. Some years ago I was talking to a man of great business experience in Siberia, interested in social reform. He told me that about the end of the War he had made a list of all the individuals whom he knew to have shown themselves progressive-minded and public-spirited in that country. He found now that they had all been marked out for destruction; they were all imprisoned or dead. In my own particular sphere I could say much the same. Almost all the men and women in Germany who were known to me as workers for peace and goodwill are now in prison or exile. As to larger matters, the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation had been interested some years ago in a plan for the objective and disinterested study of political affairs. There are institutes in various nations for such scientific study, such as our own Royal Institute of International Affairs, the Berlin Hochschule für Politik, and similar bodies in France, Holland, and elsewhere. These bodies were invited to meet and work together and compare notes, and have done so for six years. The plan has worked admirably, and the Hochschule represented excellently

a reasonable German point of view. With the advent of the Nazis the higher staff were mostly dismissed, exiled, or imprisoned, and the Institute for Scientific Study turned into a propaganda office! By a similar project the broadcasting companies in Germany had been induced to talk things over with those in other countries, to avoid provocative broadcasts, and to work for mutual understanding. With the advent of the Nazis, those guilty of such goodwill were expelled.

Opposition, of course, will be left. It cannot be extirpated. But it will not be reasonable opposition or criticism. It will be savage and infuriated opposition. In Italy it is much the same story. The Dictator there could defend himself easily enough against mere mad Communists, so he has let them pretty well alone. The enemy he feared was Liberalism or Constitutionalism; he feared educated men who were accustomed to some freedom of thought and speech and valued liberty and the reign of law. They have been expelled from their universities, forbidden to speak or write, prevented from earning a living, or transported to penal islands. There is proceeding in all these countries the process which Professor Seeck considers to be the fundamental cause of the fall of ancient civilization, *die Ausrottung der Besten*, the extirpation of the best elements. Even in the constitutional countries, like France and Great Britain, one can see traces of the same process. A few years ago I was in Paris at the work of my League of Nations Committee at a time when an election was going on in the constituency where my hotel lay. There were some twelve candidates, and I read their manifestoes day by day. Four, I should say, were badly in need of a rest-cure: a Communist and an ultra-Communist on the one side, a royalist and a rabid nationalist on the other. The eight in the middle had something to say for themselves. After the first ballot it became clear that the constituency was mainly divided into those who hated the Communist so passionately that they would vote for an impossible royalist or nationalist, and those who so hated the royalists and nationalists that,

to show their indignation, they voted for a perfectly mad Communist. Reason, common sense, goodwill, fairness to opponents, objectivity of judgement . . . all such qualities were out of the picture.

There is this spirit of violence abroad. It is incompatible not only with human freedom, but with the continuance of culture and civilization. Two questions thereupon arise in one's mind: Can civilization defend itself against this enemy; and if so, what weapons or methods can it use?

Taking the second question first, I would suggest that there are two false answers to be avoided. It will be fatal, or almost fatal, if we are driven to answer violence by violence. Not merely because such an answer would probably lead to war, and thus to a general catastrophe; but, more inwardly, because thereby we shall only be increasing the poisonous element of violence in the world, and betraying the very citadel we are pledged to defend. We shall be putting our strength into unreason rather than reason. I do not say that, as a last resort, force may not have to be used. Force has its due place, to support the agreed law against the law-breaker; but it should not trespass beyond that sphere, and even there the use of it is an evil.

Some people again use a more plausible cry: they say we cannot combat these propagandas of violence, Communist or Nazi or whatever they are, with their wild and ecstatic promises, unless we also make promises outbidding them, promises of a new heaven and a new earth and a complete change in human psychology. The reason against that sort of policy is quite simple. It is that in a contest between a sane man and a madman, or between an honest man and a charlatan, the great weapon of the former is his hold on truth. As long as the battle can be kept on that ground the honest and sane man wins; if once it is transferred to the plane of mere professions and advertisement, he loses all his advantage. If our civilization is to be saved—I will discuss later exactly

what I mean by that phrase—we must meet the campaign of violence by reason, by fairness, by accurate information, and by trust in the ultimate goodwill and good sense of the great mass of disinterested mankind. I do not say that heroism and self-sacrifice will not be needed also; they will, but unfortunately the other side will have them too. Heroism and martyrdom are no monopoly of the wise.

And this brings us to the first question: If we do use the right weapons can civilization after all defend itself? Can we trust to the goodwill and good sense of disinterested mankind? Are there enough disinterested people? Are there enough who still care for justice and freedom, or are not the majority already caught in the net and infected with the poison of violence?

To this I wish to give, as far as my own observation goes, a very emphatic answer. Civilization is amply strong enough. The forces of law and of peace are—even now, in this peculiarly bad year—ever so much stronger than those of lawlessness and war. People sometimes get the opposite impression. I see that one of the American delegates, returning from the Economic Conference, gave a message to the Press saying that the Conference had failed because Europe in general ‘wanted war, and would soon have it’. Quite untrue, of course, but still people do get that sort of impression. Why do they get it? I think because of the nature—the essential nature—of newspapers. Newspapers publish news; they do not publish what is not news. If 100 million people in central Europe are living peaceful Christian lives, doing and saying nothing particular which they should not do and say, that is not news. If 1,000 trains perform their runs safely and comfortably, that is not news. It is part of the usual everyday course of affairs, and therefore is not worth mentioning. But if one man murders his wife, if one politician makes a jingo speech, if one train has an accident, that is news and is reported. We read every day the news of almost



everything that goes wrong or threatens to go wrong; and, owing to normal competition between newspapers, we read it often in an exaggerated form. And that is not all. In our own conversation we discuss the news, we talk of the things that go wrong. Neither we nor the newspapers give much attention to the things, infinitely more numerous, that go right or more or less right. There is a constant and inevitable overattention given to all the signs of danger and distress. Quite right, as a measure of precaution. Quite delusive, as a picture of the real world. That is why visitors to Europe—or to America, or almost anywhere—so often get an impression of general disaster.

Secondly, and this is a point often misunderstood, governments are nearly always more sinister and suspicious than nations are. Not because governments are a bit more wicked or foolish than you and I—rather the reverse—but because governments are bodies entrusted with a particular job, to guard the safety and welfare of their own nation, and they are naturally very much obsessed by that job. They run the great killing machine: the machine that is meant for killing foreigners, on land, on sea, or from the air, and so advancing the interests of their own people—on whose votes alone they depend. They are always thinking about those voters and afraid of what would happen if some other party could claim to be more devoted to national interests or more contemptuous of foreign interests than themselves; or what would happen if their admirals and generals threatened to resign because they said their forces were not adequate. That makes all governments far more timid and militarist and mutually suspicious than their peoples are. And, of course, it is always the governments, and not the people, that we are hearing about. Then again we are all being scared by a false picture of the world, and entertaining wild ideas of the wickedness of foreign nations. A few years ago a Bulgarian friend of mine, an intelligent public man, explained to me that many people thought British policy inconsistent, but

that he saw that our every step was dictated by our deep-seated determination—to do what? I could give you three guesses or a dozen, if you like. To annex Constantinople! And probably we imagine things just as absurd about other nations.

Last year, at Geneva during the Disarmament Conference, when things seemed to be about at their worst, I was able to assure myself of certain fundamental facts: one that, except the Great Powers, who are naturally more nervous than the rest, every government in Europe was without hesitation eager for a general reduction of armaments, and was voting steadily for the more drastic proposals. Secondly, that so far as one could get information, the longing of peoples themselves for peace, secure and lasting, was even more unmistakable. I know nothing about Japan, and my knowledge is very sketchy even about Europe, but—unless there were some great systematic effort of propaganda first—I believe that any government which plunged into war now in Europe would be in danger of being torn to pieces by its own people. I believe that to be true even of Germany, Italy, and Russia.

Nor would any government be under much temptation to run such a risk. It must be remembered that all the dictators in Europe are mere civilian agitators, with no knowledge of war. Not one is a leading soldier. If they did plunge into war they would lose all the limelight, and find themselves playing second fiddle—and a very second fiddle indeed—to some victorious, or perhaps unvictorious, general. No dictator would like that.

All these rumours of wars are, in my judgement, part of an utterly false picture of the world, due partly to the fact that misfortune and mischief are news, while peaceful prosperity is not; partly to the prominence naturally given to the struggles of governments; and partly to the exaggerated conception generally entertained of the wickedness of all foreigners from 'Perfidious Albion' to 'the unspeakable'

Turk. He is no more specially unspeakable than we are perfidious.

But apart from these more philosophical or speculative considerations, the plain concrete facts are enough to show that, even in this time of peril, the nations that stand for peace and law are far stronger than those which support one form or another of contradictory revolution. What are the strongest powers in the world? The United States, the British Empire, and France, who confessedly stand together for peace. Behind them is that interesting and powerful phalanx, the 'Straight Eight' organized by my old colleague, M. Madariaga, to act together for the most drastic form of disarmament that can be got. The eight are Spain, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. And even among the unconstitutional and suspect countries Italy and Russia are pressing strongly for disarmament, and Germany—even in the height of her Hitlerite fever—has at least not dared openly to oppose. I do not say that success will come this year or next year, but I do say that in the general contest between reason and unreason, law and violence, even in this year of reaction and madness, you and I are still on the stronger side. The civilized world still, by a great majority, believes in constitutional freedom as against despotism, in justice as against the brute battle of egoisms, in fair dealing between nations and classes rather than force and fraud. Still, I would venture to warn you, do not underrate the difficulty. Realize that through the greater part of history most of mankind have lived under despotism. The experiments in Freedom, though splendid in their achievements, have not as a rule lasted long. We want ours to last.

What is it that is notably and characteristically wrong with our present age? What is it that has given the opportunity to these dictatorial systems, so contrary to all that enlightened men have been taught to honour, to fix their

yoke upon nation after nation? It is the same trouble which caused the Great War: maladjustment, chaos, anarchy. The ancient Greeks, when they discovered the eternal laws which seemed to rule the movements of day and night, of sun, moon, planets, and fixed stars, thought of the Universe as a Cosmos, or Divine Order, obedient to the purpose and intelligence of God. They sought for Cosmos, as opposed to Chaos or Disorder, as the secret of human conduct, of society, of poetry and art and beauty. It is this Cosmos that has now failed us in one department of life after another; and so roused the dictators and devotees of violence to try and impose it upon us by force.

Need I labour the point? We have abundance, superabundance, of wealth and productive power, but it is not organized, not distributed, so that millions are unemployed and millions starving. The advance of science, especially of applied science, has been unexampled, but how are we using it? We have invented the cinema—and are educating the world in the worst standards of Hollywood. We have invented wireless telephony, and are using it so that nations are actually driven to block out by continuous shrieking the mischievous propaganda of other nations. We have at last—the crowning triumph—conquered the air, and used our conquest to make the bombing aeroplane. We all long for peace; all governments make treaties of peace; but each great government, in fear of possible war, cherishes in its own country a private armament industry which cannot live except by keeping war always alive!

Disorder, not Cosmos, everywhere! In more ordinary walks of life we have incredibly effective machinery—mostly used for making rubbish. I watched one night recently the production of a daily newspaper: a large staff, great industry, high technical skill, a hurry of eager work, and marvellous machinery, pouring out—at vast expense and with extraordinary velocity—millions and millions of columns of vulgar and rather poisonous rubbish. We have collected the most

varied foodstuffs from all corners of the earth, and doctors tell us that in consequence we are losing our teeth and our health. Is there not something of the same sort to be observed in our teeming abundance of literature and art? Something in our political action and even our daily lives—a lack of order, of quality, of clear purpose? Is it not the deep half-conscious dissatisfaction produced by this chaos, reigning where Cosmos should be, that has driven people in their outer lives into acquiescence in political tyrannies and in their inner lives into various tyrannies of superstition?

Now I do not believe that violence can ever produce real order, real concord, or Cosmos. Order is only possible through Law, and true Law must stand on an agreed basis of Justice and Freedom. I would make an appeal to you, representing the new University movement which by its permeating influence is rapidly making of Great Britain an educated nation, to see what you can do to save Liberty by restoring Order in your public action, your thinking, and your individual lives. I would venture to select two particular tasks as worthy of your strenuous effort. First, as to public affairs: from this point of view it does not matter at all what party you belong to; what matters is that all parties should maintain a certain high standard of intelligence and character. See that your own party, or at least you yourself as representing it, shall do so. For example, if you definitely resolved never to use in political controversy statements whose truth you doubted or arguments which you believed to be unfair, you would transform the whole face of the scene.

Again, I would say, as educated men and women, do not let yourselves be deceived by stunts and advertisements. Do not above all take your political conclusions, crude and whole, from the popular press. I do not wish to speak ill of journalists; many of my best and closest friends have been journalists. I only wish to call your attention to a plain economic fact. A daily penny paper lives by its advertisements, and the advertisements depend on circulation. The educated

public is small; the public with leisure time is smaller still. Therefore, of necessity, the paper which needs a very large circulation must make its appeal to the enormous uneducated public which does not think, and which has no time or energy to spare. It has to treat complex and difficult questions of economics or politics in such a way as to suit uneducated people who are not accustomed to thinking and who do not mean to take trouble about it anyhow. Well, no doubt they carry out that difficult duty, some badly and some well.

But you are educated and thoughtful people; that way of treating things is not good enough for you. In this University you have the particular and rare good fortune of possessing the Chair of International Politics, founded by the wise generosity of my old friend, Lord Davies, and occupied by one brilliant publicist after another. You are specially well off. But even for those who have no such special guide, there are now plenty of organizations, from the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the L.N.U. to various weekly papers, which do enable you to learn the facts and consider the arguments. When once you begin to do that, you will find that you tend to skip the murders and fatal accidents and divorces in the daily press, and presently even to discount the violent party denunciations.

Secondly comes a rather delicate matter for a man of my age to broach to you. You of the younger generation have come in for a surprising lot of abuse in the popular press of late years. When there was no special horrid murder to entertain us, the editor has often tried to make our scanty hairs stand on end with accounts of your exceptional depravity. When they only said it about London and Chicago I thought that possibly it was true; then they proceeded to say it about Oxford, of which I know something, and I saw it was mostly pure imaginative fiction—like the stories about big fish and gigantic gooseberries.

Still, it does seem to be true that since the War there has been in most countries a lowering and loosening of standards.

The War acted, I think, quite directly. For one thing there was an immense mixture of classes, rogues and honest men, foul livers and clean livers, all jostling together. That generally has a bad effect. Then, when your daily work was killing men, a little thieving and bullying and blackmailing might seem rather a trifle. And, from the other side, when a poor fellow was risking his life for us every day, we could hardly grudge him a bit of pleasure, lawful or unlawful, before he faced death. The War passed, but the demoralization largely remained. It seems quite certain that both in Italy and in Germany a general indignation against this lowering of moral standards was one of the prime causes of the success of the Fascist movements. There was a cry for discipline, for straightness, for decent living; and the Fascist and Nazi conspirators were able to use it for their own purposes. They have contrived in both these countries, and from what I hear, in Japan and Russia also, to identify the belief in freedom with loose living and to suggest that honour and virtue are only to be found in slavish obedience to the State—or rather to the government that happens to have seized power and to own the machine-guns. We must make it clear that this is a lie; that just as free institutions are compatible with social order, so freedom of thought and speech and conscience and daily living are compatible with a good individual life.

We must show that at least. But surely we can show much more. We can show that we loathe and reject tyranny not because it would limit our smoking and drinking and amusements, but because it would prevent our seeking truth and speaking what we believe and living according to our consciences. Freedom is not only compatible with a good life; it is the necessary condition of good life.

I remember a Russian exile many years ago describing the gradual corruption of men's consciences by the old despotism. 'First, you hear of some crime against the innocent; but you are obedient, you say nothing. Then you see the crime done with your own eyes; but you are obedient, you swear you

saw nothing. Then you are required to do the crime yourself, and it is too late to refuse.' That has been more or less the condition under which millions of human beings have lived, so far as they came under the eye of their governments, for the greater part of history. It is not good enough. We know, as well as the ancient Greeks knew, that it is not good enough. We, like them, are engaged in the great adventure of building up and maintaining a Good Life for Man, and to succeed in that adventure we must have freedom. I would ask you, who will have your influence in the world and will be here long after I have gone, to be champions of freedom in this sense; freedom to live according to your conscience, freedom to seek truth, and to utter what you believe you have found; freedom to serve—yes, by all means; the very essence of good life is service: not to serve in fear the man who stands over you with a bludgeon, but to serve in goodwill some whole of which you are part and to which you are bound by the links of love or duty: your comrades, your University, your nation, the great Society of Nations which has now at last taken concrete form, and beyond all, so far as you can discern the outlines of it, that Divine Order, or Cosmos, to which the ancient Stoics gave their loyalty, above the barriers of creed or nation, the One Great City of Men and Gods.

We can only conquer Bolshevism by making the mass of men happier than the Bolsheviks make them; we can only conquer Despotism by showing that free men live a nobler life than slaves.



## DURING THE WAR



## IV

### A LEAGUE OF NATIONS: THE FIRST EXPERIMENT (1939)

I FEEL to-day rather like an ancient Greek magistrate, summoned before the Assembly to hand in his 'Accounts' and stand his trial for having 'given false advice to the people', on the ground that his policy has obviously failed. I was in the League of Nations movement from the beginning, I had some share in the preliminary discussions which led to the Covenant; I have been for twenty years either Chairman or Vice-Chairman of one of the official committees of the League at Geneva, and of the largest unofficial League of Nations Society in the rest of the world; and have always been one of those who insisted that for English foreign policy, in Lord Cecil's phrase, the League must be all or nothing. You can tell me that the League has failed; my answer, of course, is that the League has failed because the Covenant was not carried out. Step by step it has been the betrayal, or at least the non-fulfilment, of the pledges of the great European nations that have led to the disaster of this war.

The project in 1918 was, as stated in the Royal Charter of the League of Nations Union, to build up some great international organization which would secure international justice, maintain international order, and 'eventually rid the world of war and the effects of war'. War had become incompatible with modern civilization. One looks back with a smile at Gibbon's statement about the development of war, that the art of war itself had come to be civilized. It was dependent on mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, and architecture; and 'the European forces were exercised by temperate and indecisive contests', which did little harm but served to keep alive the manly spirit of the civilized peoples. It is indeed dependent on mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, and architecture—but otherwise Gibbon's prophecy has

proved the reverse of truth. War does not less harm, but infinitely more harm than it used: and that not merely through the increased destructiveness of weapons. Another cause is the vastly increased power of governments, who can now search out every source of strength from every stratum of their population to throw into the all-absorbing effort of destruction: another is the highly complex structure of modern industrial communities, which cannot easily be rebuilt when once it has been destroyed.

"To put an end to war—a recurrent disaster, and to the fear of war—a permanent poison: that was our purpose. What was to be the method? The simplest and most direct method would have been a *Pax Romana*, peace imposed upon the world by a dominant nation of overwhelming strength; but that was clearly impossible. There is no modern State capable of enforcing its will on the rest of the world. The only practicable method, therefore, was some system of voluntary international organization. The world, which was growing more and more of a unity both in economics and culture, was still administered, as it were, in fragments, by some sixty-two sovereign independent States, each one a law to itself, each claiming the right to make war on any neighbour at any time for any cause. Of course this sovereignty was not absolute; it was modified by every treaty that was made; it was modified in fact, if not in form, by the advance of public opinion or conscience, and, at that particular time, by a realization that the past war had threatened universal ruin, and that the common interest was permanent peace. We had to seek some general agreement; an agreement which would be effective in preventing war, yet an agreement which these stubborn sovereign States, eager for peace at the moment but still full of national feeling and pride in their independence, would be willing to sign. We had to demand at least one vital reduction of sovereignty; the nations must agree in the first place to renounce war among themselves, and, in the second place, to use their united strength to defend

any unoffending member against an aggressive attack. It was no use agreeing to live in peace unless that peace was to be defended.

I remember the surprising progress made in the years 1916, 1917, and 1918, and the growing hopefulness with which I found this general conception of a Society of Nations welcomed in the year 1916 by both the Presidential candidates in America, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Wilson; by Conservative as well as Liberal and Labour statesmen in England; by delegates or voluntary societies in different countries of Europe. I remember particularly the thrill with which I first heard Lord Phillimore read in the Foreign Office the proposed text of Article XI:

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League; and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations.

and the almost incredulous joy with which we early League workers found the Covenant of the League unanimously accepted by all Members of the Peace Conference and afterwards by some four-fifths of the world.

They accepted the pledge. But, so I am told by those who worked on the League Committee at Versailles, it was hard work to persuade them to make such a sacrifice of sovereignty. The United States presently backed out altogether. The others found their Covenant very hard to live up to. Three eventually broke it: most others, in course of time, tried to explain it away. Yet the sacrifice that was asked of them was, I still think, an irreducible minimum. The continuance of absolute sovereignty, together with the prevailing emotion on which it rested, was what made permanent world order impossible.

As I wrote many years ago in one of the Open Letters of the Committee of Intellectual Co-operation:

The reason is that while the civilized world is growing more and

more a Unity this Unity has no organ of government. It is ruled by some sixty or more independent sovereign states each of whom had till a few years ago . . . and therefore has still in the minds of its average citizens . . . no duty whatever towards its neighbours.

In all countries—in dictatorships and monarchies as well as in democracies—statesmen depend for their power and office not on the goodwill of the world but on the favour of their own countrymen.

This is the clue to our tragedy. The safety of civilization depends on the great world issues being settled in accordance with the interests of the world: yet, under the system of national states, any statesman who attempted so to settle them would be facing great danger. For it is not the votes of other nations by which he stands or falls, but only the votes of his own people.

This same consideration shows the futility of the numerous proposals which were then made for making the League more 'democratic', a League of peoples, not of governments. Democracy is the right remedy for injustices inside a country; when one class oppresses another class the appeal should be made to the whole people. But when one nation is pitted against another nation, it is no help at all to stir up the feelings of the whole people on each side. The appeal should be to some supreme international authority, as far removed as possible from political passions. Experience at the League has shown that even difficult questions can be settled if they can be removed from a political atmosphere to a judicial disinterested atmosphere; even easy questions become insoluble when they are left to the mercy of nationalist politics. Furthermore, it soon became clear that neither this country nor any other could impose its own constitution upon the rest. Each member of the international society must be free to choose its own form of government and its own method of appointing its delegates.

Another suggestion, or set of suggestions, which proved to be impracticable was that of an international Parliament, making decisions by a majority vote. How were the votes to

be counted? Was Norway with 3 million inhabitants to count as equal to Germany with 66 million? Clearly not. Then was the voting to be by population? If so, to say nothing of the smaller countries, would even Britain and France commit their whole future destinies to the decision of a vast foreign assembly in which they had some 40 votes each, Germany 60, the United States 120, Russia 180, and China 400? It soon became clear that no nation would even contemplate a coercive World Parliament, deciding policy by majority vote. Even with individuals we are often confronted by the state of mind expressed in the saying: 'If I must, I won't; if I needn't, I don't mind.' And nations are far more stubborn than individuals.

Meantime all difficulties were increased by the intensification of national feeling due to the Great War. The newly emancipated nations especially were intoxicated by the ideal of independence; the ideal of international co-operation, so much more necessary at the time, left them cold. People now talk much about the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles. But at the time the treaties only expressed, and expressed in a more mild and reasonable form than popular rage would have liked, the prevalent public feelings. The more Liberal elements, typified by President Wilson, were struggling not against kings and diplomats, but against democratic statesmen dependent upon furious peoples.

War had, as usual, taught the two contradictory lessons between which nations could make their choice: to some it taught that war is so vast an evil that it should be avoided at almost any cost; to others that no instrument is so effective as war or the threat of war for extorting from your peace-loving neighbours any demand you choose. It is always to be remembered that the first aggressors against peace were not victims of the peace treaties, but two of the conquerors, Japan and Italy.

Looking back and trying to reflect on one's mistakes, I think perhaps we failed here to recognize as a danger what

was the most immediate danger of all, the profound war-weariness of England, France, and all the law-abiding or progressive nations. They longed for peace, and they longed in a selfish way. No public injustice which did not directly strike their national interests could goad them into facing trouble or risk. Consequently a free path lay open to all ambitions that were bold enough. Mustafa Kemal was first. He roused his people against the Treaty of Sèvres; England and France were too tired to take the trouble of stopping him; it was easier to abandon the Armenians. The war party in Japan came next. Neither Britain nor America nor Russia cared to check them. Mussolini, baffled in his attempt to seize Corfu in 1923 by the personal energy of Lord Cecil, was more successful in his next aggression; and we know how Ribbentrop assured Hitler time after time that, however France and England might grumble, they would never fight. War weariness was the main motive, but, speaking of this country in particular, it was reinforced by two curiously unrelated currents of opinion. Entrenched in high places were the old traditional diplomatists, who thought always in terms of 'British interests', disliked the whole conception of the League, and resented the intrusion of moral ideals into politics. On the whole they sought the friendship of the aggressors rather than the victims because the aggressors were usually the stronger, and a strong friend is better than a weak. These people received the support not only of the pacifists, who were opposed to any armed resistance whatever, but also of a wider class who were troubled in conscience about the supposed harshness of the peace treaties, and were anxious to show penitence for their own sins—or more often for those of their political opponents—by a belated and often excessive indulgence towards Germany. The Germans, and even the Italians and Japanese, might be behaving rather badly; but, after all, had they all had a fair deal?

The makers of the Covenant had, of course, imagined it as



working in a normal world, and the world in which it had to work was utterly abnormal. The surprising thing, and a thing which gives great comfort for the future, is that, in spite of all, the League very nearly succeeded. It is a cheap and facile error to which we are all prone, to explain as the fault of your own national government, or of some party opposed to your own, a failure that is due to the weakness of a whole civilization. Still, in looking back, one feels that many grave things went wrong through our ungenerous treatment of the Weimar Republic; many through the unreasonableness of France and the Little Entente, and many through our British unwillingness to give the firm assurances that would have made them reasonable.

And, looking at British politics alone, it seems as if a few very little changes might have made for the peace cause all the difference between success and failure. If at the first start, in the early twenties, we had had in the Foreign Office a statesman like Grey or Cecil, who understood and cared for the League, instead of Lord Curzon, who was steeped in the old diplomatic tradition; if at the time of the Disarmament Conference we had had as Foreign Minister Arthur Henderson, who believed in disarmament, instead of Ramsay MacDonald, who preferred that it should fail; if in the Manchurian crisis we had had Eden or Lord Lytton instead of Sir John Simon; if in the early stages of the Abyssinian crisis we had had Sir Austen Chamberlain, the whole course of history would have been different. We might well have had a disarmed world, probably backed by some international air force; the Manchurian aggression would probably have been settled by negotiation, the Abyssinian aggression have been nipped in the bud. It was not till after the Abyssinian failure that a British Prime Minister announced in despair that no single small nation in Europe could expect to be defended by the League of Nations. The great experiment had failed. The hope of a peaceful world order was gone.

Here many critics will stop me. 'Do you mean to say', they

will ask, 'that in these cases your friends wished this country and the rest of the League to go to war?' Our answer is clear. I do believe, first, that you cannot prevent war by simply running away from it. It was our duty under the Covenant not merely to avoid war but to prevent war. And the obvious way to prevent war in a world where the vast majority of mankind wants peace is for the Peace Forces to be ready to deal in time with every threat of war, whether due to genuine grievance or to mere ambition; and, if all else fails, to show that they will by united action protect any nation unjustifiably attacked. As the Article I have already quoted explains: 'Any war or threat of war is a matter of concern to the whole League; and the League shall take'—beforehand, when the war is still only a threat in the future—'whatever measures'—remedial or preventive; diplomatic, financial, or economic—'may be deemed wise and effectual for safeguarding the peace.' But, in the last resort, there must be the possibility of coercion. A great many plans for world peace were put forward in the years 1916, 1917, and 1918, by the American League to Enforce Peace, by the British League of Nations Society, by the League of Free Nations Association, as well as by various individuals, official and unofficial; but all, I think, without exception were based on the idea of a League or group of nations willing, first, to settle all disputes among themselves peacefully, and, secondly, to defend every member against aggressive attack. A formula which occurs time after time with slight variations in the various drafts of that date runs thus:

Members of the Society . . . shall make provision for mutual defence, diplomatic, economic or military, in the event of any of them being attacked by a state which refuses to submit the case to an appropriate tribunal or council.

That was the hardest duty which members of the League undertook; it was indispensable; and they failed in it. Had they been ready to act in time, there would have been no talk

of force: had they been ready to use force, there would have been no need for it. It was because the aggressor could always count on the Great Powers not being ready to face a risk of war that he felt free to do his worst against smaller victims.

Take, as examples, the two cases I have mentioned. In the case of Manchuria, we clearly could not have gone to war against Japan without the active support of America. I omit the disputed question whether America offered us that support or not; Mr. Stimson and Sir John Simon have given different accounts; I suspect that both parties were about equally anxious to shirk such dangerous responsibilities. But, apart from that, there were two things which the League Governments could have done had they been true to their principles. The Council proposed that a Commission of Inquiry should go to the spot to consider the best solution of the problems between Japan and China and the relief of Japanese grievances. The Japanese Government agreed. A Commission was appointed—a first-rate Commission, with Lord Lytton as the Chairman—but there were needless delays in appointing it and further needless delays in sending it out, so that, excellent as its proposals were, they came far too late. The war they might have prevented was almost finished. And why had the Japanese ventured not merely to break their treaties but to defy the resolution of the League Council? Probably they cared little for what the Council of the League might say; they cared greatly what England and France and the other great nations might say. When resolutions from the Council of the League were duly sent from Geneva to Japan, Lord Lytton tried in vain to get the Governments of the great nations each to send its own Ambassador to hand in the League resolution. To do that would have shown that the Governments were in earnest; and the path for negotiation would have been laid down. The Governments preferred to show that they were not in earnest; the Germans and others secretly encouraged Japan,

and Sir John Simon proclaimed openly his rejection of the fundamental principle of the League: 'The object of my policy', he said in the House, 'is to keep my own country out of trouble.' The aggressor might do as he liked.

In the Abyssinian case, the same Foreign Minister proclaimed the same rejection of principle. He 'would not risk losing a single British ship for the sake of Abyssinia'. With a sincere and resolute policy there would have been no need to risk ships; our Government and the French Government knew well beforehand, certainly as early as 1934, of Mussolini's project for a war against Abyssinia. They knew it when it was only an idea; when Mussolini was in no sense committed. They had time to stop it without danger in 1934; they had time to stop it even at the Stresa Conference in April 1935. That conference was specially called in order to settle all existing points of difference between England, France, and Italy; yet Abyssinia was never mentioned at it. Mussolini was allowed to assume, and did assume, that his aggression upon Abyssinia constituted no 'point of difference'; that Great Britain, like France, was ready to stand aside, break her treaties, and give friendly connivance to his international crime. When it was already too late for effective action, Sir John Simon resigned, Sir Samuel Hoare tried an unsuccessful compromise, Mr. Eden did goad the unwilling governments into imposing economic sanctions on Mussolini; but, do what he would, he could not make them impose the one sanction that would have settled the war in a month—the refusal of petrol for Mussolini's aeroplanes. It appeared afterwards that certain governments had given Italy the assurance that they would not agree to any sanctions being imposed which would effectively hamper Italian arms. The whole story should be read in the annual *Survey* published by Chatham House. A clear case had been put before the civilization of western Europe, the Liberal Christian civilization under which we live; that civilization was asked whether it would or would not, in a case where success was certain, be

faithful to its Covenant and protect a backward member of the League against utterly unprovoked aggression; and the great nations had turned in their sleep and been unwilling to move. As Mr. Te Water, on behalf of the South African Government, stated in the Assembly on 1 July 1935: 'Fifty nations, led by three of the most powerful nations in the world, are about to declare their powerlessness to protect the weakest in their midst from destruction.' He went on to point out that there was no lack of power to fulfil the trust; only a lack of will 'to bear the sacrifices necessary for the fulfilment of their obligations'.

Our civilization had announced to the world and to history that it had not the necessary sense of corporate duty, not the necessary strength of mind, to defend itself.

One could write a sort of Sunday-school story, showing how this deadly failure at the last was only the climax of a series of actions showing slight incorrectness, slight bad faith, and an increasing neglect of international obligations. In July 1934 the Nazis murdered President Dollfuss. The matter ought instantly to have been brought before the League; but Mussolini, always an enemy of world order, offered to protect Austria himself on condition the League was not brought in; and Britain and France assented. Britain made a naval treaty with Germany, contrary to the Treaty of Versailles and without the consent of France. M. Laval made a private understanding with Mussolini, without the knowledge of England. The re-militarization of the Rhineland, the overrunning of Austria, the hideous persecution of the Jews, which soon assumed an international and not merely a domestic significance, the preposterous hypocrisies of non-intervention in Spain, the invasion and persecution of Czechoslovakia, followed in gradually ascending scale, till at last, with the League broken and the collective security that had once existed thrown away, England and France found themselves alone, clinging together for mutual protection and ready for almost any sacrifice if only they

might be left in peace. It was not to be. At last they are forced in mere self-preservation to face alone a peculiarly dangerous war on behalf of the vital interests of the whole civilized world: the very war which the League was intended to prevent, and would have prevented if it had not been betrayed!

'True enough,' you may say, 'but is not this confession of failure a condemnation of your whole scheme? Why did the member nations fail to support the League? Because you were asking too much of them. The Governments were mostly supported by their own peoples in their refusal to take these risks. No nation will face war or the risk of war for the sake of another.' If that is so, I can only say again that civilization is doomed. It is exactly like the situation in Chicago in the palmy days of Al Capone and Bug Moran. The peaceful citizens of Chicago hated the gangsters, they were infinitely stronger than the gangsters, they could have put the gangsters down at any time they liked; but the man who was first to interfere with them ran the risk of being shot, and no individual apparently, in the police or out of it, cared to take that risk. So the gangsters did what they liked. In the case of Chicago, the town was saved by a God from the Machine in the shape of the U.S. Government, which was far away out of the gangsters' power and proceeded to arrest Al Capone not for his Chicago murders, but for certain errors in his Federal income tax. There is no *deus ex machina* to save our civilization. It must save itself or perish.

Apologists for these betrayals spoke in Parliament and wrote in *The Times* saying that what they wanted was a League without sanctions. I always wondered if they knew what the words meant. It was a League of Nations intended to preserve peace, and the condition they required was that every member of it should be free to make war; there should be no obligation on the rest of the League either to stop the aggression or even to refrain from helping the aggressor. The League might indeed intercede with him, it might express its

moral condemnation; but it must on no account cease to trade with him or refuse to supply him with such materials of war as he might need. The other members should, in fact, say to the aggressor: 'We condemn your action; you are committing a crime against God and man; and now, that point being clear, what would you like us to sell you—oil, arms, iron, anything else to help your crime? We are all ready for a profitable trade.' This notion that nations should form a society or League for co-operating in other matters, in putting down the opium traffic or the white slave traffic, in making arrangements about posts and currencies and railways, but at the same time be perfectly free to use their sovereign right of war, is surely both in fact and principle an absurdity. The very first result would be rival groups of armed alliances, treating war or peace not as a matter of public right and wrong, but as a pure question of self-interest. War would be no longer a crime: it would be re-established as the recognized and respectable *ultima ratio* of politics.

Let me turn to an opposite criticism. Did we perhaps, or the contrary, ask too little? We certainly asked for as much as ever we could get. Free nations cannot be compelled to sign agreements against their will; if they are cajoled into doing so the agreements are not practically enforceable. Any organization of world order which could be relied upon had to be one accepted by voluntary agreement.

Two great societies of nations already existed, and might to some extent be used as a model, the British Commonwealth and the United States; the one with no binding constitution at all except a common allegiance to the person of the king; the other with a particularly precise and rigid constitution, which it had as a matter of fact outgrown. Neither was a very apposite example to the League-makers, because both were held together by a community of laws, traditions, history, and language and for the most part also by common interests. Our task was far harder: to make a

new society out of nations among whom no such community existed, a society in which potential enemies should sit in peace at the same table and gradually learn to co-operate. The League-makers followed on the whole the British precedent, though they did put in the Covenant one or two obligations which were not in the constitution of the British Commonwealth, but which have as a matter of fact now become the chief constitutional bond between its parts. (See the Report of the Commonwealth Conference at Toronto, 1933.) It was impossible to go farther. It is surprising indeed how far the nations, under the impact of the World War, were willing to go in the limitation of their sovereignty.

Consider what the makers of the Covenant got them to resign. First, they accepted an International Court for the settlement of all justiciable disputes. True, at first it was only a voluntary court; but soon all the greater nations were persuaded to sign the so-called Optional Clause, and thus to accept without qualification the third-party judgement of the Court on all justiciable disputes. This was a great achievement. I remember M. Motta, then President of the Swiss Republic, saying to me that the first Great Power which should sign the Optional Clause would be followed by all the lesser nations like a guiding star! There remained of course the disputes that were not justiciable, where there was no problem of legal right and wrong, but only of interests or what is called 'national honour'. On these the nations are bound to go to arbitration; to submit to any unanimous decision of the Council; and if the Council is not unanimous at least to submit to long delays before going to war.

The Right of War, the very citadel of sovereignty, if not absolutely abolished, was reduced almost to vanishing point. A genuine attempt to abolish it was made in the Geneva Protocol, which failed to find acceptance in 1924 owing to British opposition, but soon afterwards it was resigned altogether in the Kellogg Pact. As far as mere treaties could do it, the Right of War was given up.



The surrender would have been made practically effective had the disarmament clauses of the Covenant been carried out. By Article VIII the nations agreed to accept whatever limitation an international body should impose on them, and agreed further not to arm beyond that limit afterwards. International inspection was an obvious corollary; another corollary, in my opinion, must have been some kind of international policing to prevent illegal armament. Had this Article of the Covenant been carried out, it would, I think, practically speaking, have been impossible for any member of the League, or even for a rebel against the League like Japan, Italy, or Germany, to make war in defiance of the League.

Why did the Disarmament Conference fail? It was a long struggle, and ended very nearly in success. Years of thought were spent on the technical problems, that is, the problem of so reducing armaments that every nation shall be secure, and no nation capable of a successful invasion of another. Much nonsense was talked about the words 'aggressive' and 'non-aggressive'; people delighted in proving that a lead pencil was an aggressive weapon if properly jabbed into your neighbour's eye, or arguing that nations could fight as bitterly with spears and arrows as with gas and machine guns. The problem was not to put all nations on an equality of armament, but to make sure that no nation could have the weapons which would enable it successfully to invade a neighbour; and I can quote Sir John Simon himself for the judgement that towards the end of the Conference every technical problem had been solved, and only the political problems remained. In other words it was lack of will, and almost exclusively lack of will among the Great Powers, which prevented the success of that great Conference; lack of will based on lack of mutual trust, and on the knowledge of Germany's widespread secret rearmament in factories outside her own borders.

A third surrender of sovereignty was far harder to bring about, at any rate so long as armaments remained national

and not international. It is not so very difficult for a law-abiding nation to give up its so-called 'right of war', and agree not to use war as an element of national policy; it is far more difficult, as experience has shown, for it to agree actually to use war as an instrument of international authority to protect not itself but some other member of the society. But of that I have already spoken. The engagements of the Covenant on this point are both hesitating and obscure. When Article XVI was drafted, all nations were strongly impressed by the immense effectiveness of the economic blockade, while they hated the very thought of war. This reluctance to accept any obligation to fight runs through the whole Article. Nations agree to apply a boycott, and even a blockade; but no clear provision is made for the possibility that the boycotted aggressor might fight to resist the boycott. No account is taken of the obvious fact that a boycott, to be effective, has to be practically unanimous; unless it is so, it breaks down. No adequate distinction is drawn between the respective obligations of nations which are really able to enforce a blockade or use military measures and those which could not do either. I think the obligations of this Article should in some ways be more limited: but at all costs should be made clear and definite. Nations have not much scruple in evading a loosely expressed obligation; they do not like to be seen publicly breaking a perfectly specific pledge.

There was another problem, even more elusive, which the Covenant for the first time in history attempted to face. No treaty known to me has ever made provision for future changes in the world to be effected by peaceful agreement among nations. Article XIX attempted this; the Assembly was given the power of considering and reconsidering any treaty which had grown obsolete or any international condition whatever which threatened the peace of the world. The Article has never been actually used, though its existence as a threat in the background has had some effect, and very large changes have as a matter of fact been brought about.

The cause that prevented Peaceful Change is the same that has wrecked the other hopes of mankind, the constant threat of war lurking in the background. Nations living under the shadow of that threat will never agree to any change that weakens their military security.

So far, in running through the main limitations of sovereignty imposed by the Covenant, we have found in each case that the limitations were great but imperfect.

Is there any part of the League work, then, for which I would claim not a qualified success or an excusable failure, but success real, striking, and humanly speaking unqualified? Yes. The Court is an amazing success. It works. It has given some thirty decisions, often against great nations and in favour of small ones. It has no force behind it, no gun, no policeman. And it has never been disobeyed. Few of us realize what an immense advance this means. Again, all the constructive co-operative work, which after all constitutes nine-tenths of the League's activity, and is going on at this moment at Geneva, not unshaken but still unbroken by the actual war, has been without qualification a success. Curiously enough, this element in the League's work which has proved so beneficial was insisted upon by the English committees concerned in the framing of the Covenant, for a quite separate reason. We felt that the great difficulty in the way of international co-operation to settle disputes, to change conditions that had become intolerable, or to coerce aggressors, was that if the representatives of nations only met to do such things as that, they would meet suddenly as strangers, in times of crisis, and in unco-operative states of mind. We were anxious that they should have plenty of routine work to do of a useful kind in which their interests were concordant. The League was entrusted with health work for the prevention of epidemics, work which has been extraordinarily successful in itself, and has now been greatly developed by taking in the problem of nutrition; with financial and economic research, the most effective and best

furnished that there has ever been in the world; with the putting down of certain great scourges like the traffic in drugs, the traffic in women and children, and the practice of slavery: evils which were international in their methods and defied the action of ordinary national police. These were matters of interest to all enlightened States, matters in which those concerned were willing and anxious to co-operate. I well remember the first time I sat on the Opium Commission of the Assembly, a Commission consisting of some fifty-odd different nations; how I looked about the room, wondering whether these utterly diverse and mutually unintelligible persons could ever work coherently on a practical scheme; and how gradually, as the problems came before us and experts belonging to different nations discussed one method or another, we all soon forgot the nationalities of the speakers, discussed the problems on their merits, and came gradually to conclusions about the work to be done. One sees the same process in the Mandates Committee. It contains many of the greatest colonial administrators in the world, ready as the reports come in to give advice, or if necessary correction, to the young administrators who come before them, faced largely with the same problems, as part of the 'sacred trust of civilization'. There is a great common work being carried on in a new international spirit.

The International Labour Office again has in many ways changed the face of the world. In this last year it has produced an agreement affecting coloured labour which an expert on the subject has described to me as the greatest advance since the abolition of slavery. These great activities have abundant success in peace: but war, of course, ruins them all.

I have been able to judge certain elements of the work of the International Labour Office from those subjects in which it has worked together with my own Committee of Intellectual Co-operation. I could speak much of the work of that committee, of which I have been President for the last eight

years, baffled and hampered always by lack of support, but steadily improving the relations between different nations in unobtrusive ways by discussions between savants and writers, by agreements affecting the cinema and the broadcasting services, by continual work at education. This Committee was entrusted by the Assembly in the years 1924 and 1926 with the duty of seeing that in the territories of all members of the League young people were taught something of 'the work and the aims of the League of Nations', and also made to realize 'that international co-operation is the normal method' of a good world government. It was done in England, it was done in France; for a short time under the Socialist Minister of Education, Dr. Becker, it was begun in Prussia. If my colleagues and I could have persuaded the great Governments to take a real interest in this project and see to the carrying out of similar schemes of education throughout Europe, such a step might probably have gone far towards preventing the rise of Hitler and saving the peace of the world.

After all, the League is not dead. Its roots are too deep and far-reaching to be torn up. The Finance Committee of the Council has just met; the Fourth Commission is to meet in December. The Turkish Treaty has been registered with the League. The Labour Office continues; all the non-political constructive activities continue. My own Committee is still working effectively. But of course all these activities, like all work whatever for human progress and well-being, are arrested by war, and now we are at war again.

The first experiment has failed. Certain men of my generation, under the guidance of a great and inspired leader, Lord Cecil, have done what we could towards facing a gigantic task which was never likely to be solved in the twenty-odd years which we have given to it, nor likely ever to be solved within the lifetime of those who started the movement. We die, but the movement cannot die; for to let it die would be to despair of civilization.

## V

### A BRAINS TRUST ANSWER

*February 1943*

**QUESTION.** What are the prospects of a League of Nations after the War?

**ANSWER.** I think that a League of Nations, or an international organization on the lines of the League of Nations, is absolutely inevitable. If the United Nations remain united it will be a strong and useful League such as was described or indicated by Mr. Morrison in his excellent speech on 24 February 1943. If they fail to remain united it will be a weak and struggling League, and it may fail as it did last time. Last time we did not stay united: that was the fundamental cause of the League's weakness and failures. But we have great advantages now. Last time we had to create the League of Nations out of nothing; this time the foundations are there.

The International Labour Office is working hard at post-war problems; it is regularly consulted by governments. Even the League itself, in its non-political work, is carrying on and doing a surprising amount of work considering the difficulties. I was looking at the Report of the Opium Commission; it is really doing something. Looking at the Report of the Health Commission, I find that seventeen governments have consulted it during the War and got presumably useful advice from it. Epidemics, you know, don't distinguish between friend and foe or between Nazi and anti-Nazi.

Then there is the International Court. It was very difficult and delicate work to establish it; and I don't believe the world, having once had that enormous convenience, will be able to get along without it.

In the second place there are immense new international

organizations being formed constantly during the War. Think what is involved, for instance, in the stores of food to be collected on the other side of the Atlantic for the relief of European famine the moment the War is over, and all the organization that is already there for that work. Think of the international controls that are being formed for shipping, purchases, lease-lend, common ports and bases, and all the planning work done for the permanent organization of the food supply of the world. What an amazing thing! All the staples of foods are to have the supply regulated to correspond with the demand, so that never again shall we have wheat burned in one country while in another millions of people starve for lack of bread.

Of course it all depends on whether we have learnt our lesson, whether the unspeakable misery caused by this War shows that war has grown more and more intolerable and incompatible with civilization. If we want to live as good neighbours, if we want to maintain all this economic security we hear so much about, we must stand together to maintain the law. As the Prime Minister [Mr. Churchill] used to say again and again in the old days: 'There is no security except collective security.'

## VI

### THE ANCHOR OF CIVILIZATION

ONE of my old colleagues in Glasgow University, Sir Henry Jones, used to tease me by maintaining that if a crime was committed by some unknown person in the east end of Glasgow, or for that matter of London, he and I were personally responsible for it. It was in some way our sinful lives that had really caused the crime. I always stoutly maintained my complete innocence, although I agreed that, if the people with personal experience of the East End, such as the police and welfare workers, considered that crime there would be noticeably reduced by an improvement in my character, I was quite ready to try to improve it. Sir Henry's paradox seems to have become widely current at the present day. I am constantly being told that the present miseries of Europe and Asia are due not to the obvious factual causes which can be seen at work, but to some deep-seated and practically universal wickedness, and can never be cured except by some profound inward repentance of the world in general. The theory is chiefly current in countries like Britain and the United States, which have had little contact with the most cruel facts; it is in my opinion a theory rather characteristic of the self-centred spectator. Instead of facing the real facts and seeking out the real remedies, he falls back on the enjoyment of his own favourite beliefs or prejudices and the pleasure of blaming the faults he is accustomed to blame.

On one side, of course, the commonest diagnosis is that Poles, Greeks, Belgians, and others are dying of disease, famine, and massacre because you and I and our contemporaries have fallen away from Christian orthodoxy. Is that true? Is it even true that the more orthodox parties, represented, say, on the one hand by some of the brave German bishops, on the other by Generals Pétain and Franco, have been markedly better and wiser in their policies than the less



orthodox such as Briand and Croce? But, apart from that, is it at all possible to base the cause of world-wide concord and collaboration on an exclusive claim of one of the great competing religions to be the sole possessor of eternal truth? Religious wars are not only a well-known historical phenomenon; they are far from extinct; in Calcutta, for instance, and Belfast. A more defensible demand would be that of my lamented friend, Sir Francis Younghusband, that in a far humbler frame of mind men of different creeds should unite in working for those ethical ideals which they hold in common. But surely the correct answer to Sir Samuel Hoare's famous appeal for a Christian crusade was given by the editor of the Istanbul newspaper, *Vatan*, in a letter to *The Times*:

'We objected', he writes, 'not because we happen to belong to another religion, but because at this delicate period we want stress laid upon the common bonds of humanity instead of issues being raised which might tend to create division and dissent. The common interests involved in this great struggle must be considered as sacred ground.'

Quitting the slippery ground of theology, a more general complaint is that society is somehow sunk in selfish materialism; hence it fell into disastrous wars and will never recover its happiness till it changes. To which I would reply first by asking if there has ever been a period, ancient or modern, which was not sunk in materialism—at least if we believe its own preachers and moralists? It is highly probable that mankind does care, and always has cared, far more than it ought for money, food, drink, sensual pleasures, stupid or cruel amusements, and other normal satisfactions of the *bête humaine*; but is there the faintest evidence that we are more addicted to such things than our ancestors a hundred or two hundred years ago, or again that any such addiction on our part has done anything whatever to cause the War? When I read accounts of the dinners our ancestors ate in the days, for instance, of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Charles II, and the

eighteenth century—you can find some striking menus in Rose Macaulay's *Life among the English*—or note, for example, the behaviour in which even Queen Elizabeth's maids of honour could indulge without losing their posts, I receive the reverse impression. Approaching the matter from quite another angle, how do the journalist critics who say we are sunk in materialism, and corrupted by lack of religious teaching, explain their own enthusiastic comments on the courage and generosity of the average citizen during the air raids? Our young women are said, by these critics, to be a particularly sad lot—possibly they are; they sometimes look it—yet I notice in a Guide issued by the American War Office the statement: 'There is not a single record in this war of any British woman in uniformed service quitting her post or failing in her duty under fire.' The Londoners are, of course, the worst and most irreligious of all. Yet they showed not only great courage but something more. A man who had very special opportunities of judging the temper of people in air raids said to me: 'I always imagined that in moments of danger everyone would think of himself, but it simply is not so.' These extreme samples of a materialist generation thought of others rather than themselves in the face of death! It is a very risky business to draw up either an indictment or an encomium of a whole nation, comprising many millions of individuals, each one with a more or less mixed character; but, suppose we admit the worst, does anyone really believe that the War of 1939 came about because the children in elementary schools in East London lived in squalor and did not know the Lord's Prayer? We know quite well, and Hitler has expressly informed us, that this War, the fifth in succession, is part of the long-continued and perfectly intelligible effort of Germany to obtain what she considers her rightful supremacy in Europe.

I fully admit that these views which I am criticizing contain much valuable and edifying matter, and I hope to

return to them later. But they exasperate me by their irrelevance and, I will even say, by their egotism. I seem to see a suffering Job being strangled in the coils of a boa constrictor: and the Comforters gathering round him. The boldest say definitely that the snake is very properly strangling him because of various sins—which, incidentally, he has not committed—and will destroy him unless he confesses and repents, while most of them hardly notice the snake at all but eagerly explain how much better he would be if he wore Jaeger underclothes, took regular exercise, abstained from alcohol and tobacco, and consoled himself with vitamins B and C. One could almost excuse him if he exclaimed: 'I did not ask how to become a better man. I will attend to that later on. At present I only want to be saved from this reptile.'

I have still less sympathy with the divers political partisans, Left, Right, or merely eccentric, who exclaim with passion that if only their domestic programmes were carried out and their rascally political opponents interned or exterminated, we need not much bother about such things as wars. The world would soon right itself. Considering the awful disasters caused by excessive party spirit in France, Spain, Germany, and other countries of Europe; considering what systematic and successful use the enemy has made of extreme Left and extreme Right parties for distracting his victims before actually invading them; it is strange to see what vitality that particular vice still possesses in communities which ought to know better.

The same egotistic irrelevance spreads to economics. The world has suffered so much since the last War, and even earlier, from economic troubles and maladjustments that it is now generally agreed that one of the chief aims of the World Organization to be set up after the War must be to put an end to the international anarchy in economics. That is a matter fully agreed and of the first importance. Yet somehow, as soon as the word economics is mentioned, all the

parties with special economic programmes, from Communists to Free Traders, from Trade Unionists to Social Creditors, seem to become intoxicated. For example, you find people maintaining almost as a matter of course that all wars are due to economic causes, and if you want peace all you need do is to raise the standard of prosperity in all countries: an odd view, based largely on the impulse given to Hitlerism by the distress in Germany after the inflation. I call it odd because it implies that countries tend to commit aggression when they are poor, suffering, and weak, whereas it is surely obvious that countries do not commit aggression unless they think they have a good chance of winning; that is, unless they are rich, confident, and strong. Of course there are cases where an economic motive is a contributing cause. There are cases where a bad government makes war in order to avoid revolution. But this prevalent doctrine overlooks the ordinary motive of ambition, the desire for glory and power, such as made the German wars of 1864, 1866, 1870, and 1914. It overlooks Napoleon, Frederick the Great, Caesar, Alexander, Xerxes, not to speak of the Beasts and Horns of the Book of Daniel. It overlooks the influence of mere nationalist passions, which have played a considerable part in the relations of France and Germany; which have formed the most important element in the various Balkan wars and which—for example—make the Arabs of Palestine prefer poverty without the Jews to prosperity with them, and the southern Irish to prefer the pride of isolation to the obvious economic advantages of the British connexion. It overlooks all these things, and overlooks them for the same old egotistic reason. Its authors are wrapped up in their own economic preoccupations and not thinking sincerely and objectively about the problem of war.

This wide confusion of counsels is obscured and made worse by the well-known curse of all attempts at political science, the utter lack of precision in the terms it is compelled to use. We know what a dodecahedron is; we know

what volts and amperes are; we once knew what a pound sterling was. But who knows what democracy is? I find one account that is at least coherent. The basic principle of democracy is that all men are equal; a bad man is just as good as a good man. The common man is the unit, and One Man One Vote the system. Suffrage is universal. Everyone votes for what he wants; and if the majority want beer, tobacco, jazz, and a yellow press—well, ‘that is all we know on earth, and all we need to know’. Compare that statement with the following description of democracy by an important American journalist, Mr. Agar:

Democracy is first of all a code of conduct. It is a rigorous way of life, beginning with morals. It begins with an act of faith about the nature of man and about the dignity of his soul, and with a determination to build institutions which will fulfill that nature and uphold that dignity.

To be true democrats we must conquer within ourselves the slackness, the indifference to truth, the acquiescence in what stupid men call ‘practical’, the worship of what William James has called ‘that bitch-goddess, Success’.

Mr. Agar demands, therefore, ‘a rebirth of Faith’. It does not sound like a description of the same thing, does it? It is not that one of these writers thinks democracy a good thing and the other thinks it a bad thing; it is simply that when they use the same word they are not talking about the same object.

However, with those words of Mr. Agar’s in our minds, let us consider the system which we, as democrats, are warring against and which we regard with horror. It is called Fascism, and we all know the sort of things our newspapers say about it; but let us hear its International Secretary, Major Barnes:

Fascism is a definite revolt against materialism. . . . It is determined to educate the new generation into one of believers in Divine Providence, the heralds of an age of faith; to make it a generation of heroes who know no fear because of their faith, who would exalt the spirit of

sacrifice, gladly fly to face any danger in a worthy cause and welcome martyrdom with a smile. This is no exaggeration. This is the root of the Fascist Revolution. God is to become once more the central principle of our conscious life, with an objective didactic moral law, founded on reason, recognized as paramount . . . a law that sums up and harmonizes all our loyalties, dethrones both the individual and the state from the position they would usurp from God.

If that is what Fascism is, and democracy is what Mr. Agar says it is, one hardly sees why they should go to war. One would rather expect them to join hands in promoting a 'rebirth of faith', a rejection of materialism, and a crusade for the abolition of slackness, indifference to truth, and the worship of the 'bitch-goddess', and the building up of a generation of heroes.

It would be easy to collect similar descriptions of other pairs of opposites; for instance of Catholicism and Communism as being each essentially an uncompromising rejection of worldly values and a championship of the poor and oppressed. Is it that both the controversialists are more intent on claiming for their own party an ideal which all good men would approve than on describing objectively its real tenets? Or would it be fairer to say that there is some high and true aim by which they are both fascinated but which they see only in fragments and dimly, and which they state all wrong when they translate it into political language?

That is troublesome enough, though it is only what the human race is amply accustomed to; but the trouble is that the advocates of all these systems from Pétain to the Youth Conference in the Albert Hall, from Lenin in his proclamations of 'Mass terror' to von Schirach in his addresses to the Hitler *Jugend*, agree in one disastrous particular. They all demand Faith, unquestioning and heroic Faith; and I am inclined to suspect that that is just where they are all wrong. What is this unquestioning Faith? No doubt there is a question of degree. There is a habit of uncertainty or lack of

faith which makes a man helpless against his opponents and of little use to his friends. It is often the result of some staggering disaster or disappointment. There was much of it in Germany after the defeat of 1918. But it is not a common state of mind. And for Europe in general I think it would be infinitely wiser counsel if Fascist and Communist, Left and Right, Catholic and anti-Catholic, Christian and non-Christian, were, in Cromwell's famous words, 'conjured by the bowels of Christ to remember the possibility that they might be mistaken'. All the worst crimes of this ghastly period are caused or facilitated not by lack of faith but by fanaticism. It is not profitable to calculate and compare the volume and intensity of the cruelties committed by Left and Right, by Franquist or Republican, by Ogpu or Gestapo; in general the extent of the villainies has varied with the power to inflict them; but in all cases the drug which stimulated men's hate and cruelty and deadened the inhibitions of conscience and reason alike was always the same: the quality which its admirers call 'unquestioning faith' and its opponents call 'fanaticism'. No doubt it is a matter of temperament and emotion much more than of intellect; but it involves a conviction, first, that some doctrine or set of doctrines of a man's own are absolutely and unquestionably correct, and secondly that those correct doctrines constitute the one true guide to Life, a possession so infinitely precious that the welfare or misery of human beings becomes a thing of no weight at all compared with them, conscience and the moral law cease to operate. The non-acceptance of the doctrines is not merely a crime to be punished, but a poison to be exterminated. How often in listening to the various autocrats or demagogues of late years has one been reminded of Gibbon's phrase about Justinian's persecutions: 'With such principles as these it was incumbent upon him at least to be always right.' Which erring mortality never is. The alternative to fanaticism is liberality. Liberality seeks to learn and understand instead of claiming to know. No Liberal

persecutes; and no party in Europe, whatever its name, which is permeated by a liberal spirit has been guilty of any of these major crimes. Liberality, you may say, is too weak an instrument to wage war with. Its voice is not heard when men are killing each other. Besides it has too little faith in itself to be sure that what it says is true, and you cannot make a gospel out of mere probabilities. The first charge is true. When war is raging the laws are silent and Liberality has no power. But the second charge is false. All gospels are made out of probabilities, not out of certainties. No one fights and dies for the multiplication table. Men do both for various highly complex hopes, fears, and aspirations about which certainty is unattainable, and among which the Liberal desire to seek truth and try to do right cannot be denied a place.

Let us get away from this turmoil of ideologies and look at facts. The fundamental horror before our eyes is the fact of WAR. Misery unspeakable is being spread through Europe. We British, for the most part, hardly realize it. We are spectators on the benches; it is others who are being slaughtered in the arena. Even if this winter the German bombers again do their worst to us, we shall only have suffered the first stage of what Europe has felt so long, and China so much longer. We shall have the bombing and the destruction of our homes; but we shall not have the long agony and humiliation of occupation by the enemy. In Greece children and adults have been dying of hunger and the results of hunger at the rate of thousands a day. In Poland and Czechoslovakia they are being tortured and massacred: over a thousand hostages killed at times in reprisal for one German life! From another part of Europe come stories of the last resort of a starving population, cannibalism. From all parts comes, swift or slow, the advance of pestilence. From one of the less-oppressed countries in western Europe a doctor writes that people are brought to his hospital who have no definite disease but just die; die because they have no vitality left. Such cases, he reports, used to be counted by



the month, now they can be counted by the day. And besides all this there is the ordinary monstrous carnage and agony; five years they have had of it in China; about 10,000 men are said to be wounded or killed day by day in Russia. Besides the misery think of the hatred. War is seldom due to hatred, but it always produces hatred. 'In my country', said one European friend of mine, 'everybody has collected some weapon, a rifle, a tommy-gun, a club, an axe. They whisper among themselves of "the Day of the Axes" . . . the day when these weapons can at last be used.'

Is that sum of misery not enough? Apparently not, for war, as Thucydides says, is 'a violent schoolmaster', and all his pupils are being compelled to add to the misery. Deeds are being done, which, if one could apply ordinary standards, would be frightfully wicked and cruel: yet the people who do them are not wicked or cruel men. Two of our best weapons for winning the war, it is said, are bombing and blockade. What two could be crueller, more contrary to the old chivalrous standards? Yet the people who organize the blockade and the bombing are not wicked men. Consider the bombing of towns: the young men who bomb Hamburg or Coventry, Genoa or London, who in particular cases go on bombing night after night so that their victims may never have any respite from their increasing misery, are not wicked men. They not only do these things. They write enthusiastic letters describing how they have enjoyed their work; what splendid havoc they have made; how such and such a day or moment was the happiest in their lives. Yet they are not wicked men. They are caught in an inescapable net; they have a purpose so strong, a goal so precious, that ordinary considerations become as nothing compared with it. Stimuli of an utterly abnormal kind have been applied to them, which stunt or deaden certain instincts which are generally cultivated and prized, while they encourage and stimulate others which in civilized life are habitually suppressed and discouraged. The violent schoolmaster has them in his grip.

The Christian, the gentleman, the thinker, the civilized man, dwindles away. Only the fighter remains.

Men do incredibly wicked things but are not at all wicked men. This is what gives a sort of plausibility to the views I was criticizing above. People tend at once to say that it is the fault of society. Society is so selfish, so materialist, so rotten. The bad old world must pass away; the only hope is to build out of this horror a New World in which—in some unexplained way—people are to have various virtues according to the speaker's taste. (Oddly enough, the favourite virtue is self-sacrifice, which happens to be, together with courage, the one for which our age of war offers special opportunities.)

But what nonsense it is to maintain that England and English society of the last generation have brought these disasters upon them by their unchristian selfishness! Faulty as our foreign policy has been, no one can say that, since the Peace of Vereeniging, it has been aggressive. Our foreign critics prefer to emphasize British timidities and constant retreats. Towards Germany we impulsively tried to follow our time-honoured practice of shaking hands at once after a fight. This sometimes made fools of us, it alienated most of our previous allies, but it was certainly not aggressive or unchristian. We indulged in no policy of revenge. We had a horror of war; most people would say we had too much, in that we seemed to think you could prevent war by ignoring it or running away from it. It will be generally agreed that we went at least to the verge of imprudence and dishonour in seeking to avoid war, until at last we had to accept it under peculiarly adverse conditions. Our foreign critics, of course, said we were a cowardly nation; but that view has proved to be mistaken. Some of our home critics said we thought too much about trade interests; that is probably true, but trade interests are extremely important things. There is nothing selfish or unchristian in trying hard to prevent the dislocation of some great industry on which the livelihood of thousands may depend. Those who cry out upon us as a

mercenary generation, sunk in devotion to what they call 'the profit motive', ought surely to produce a few cases of gross public corruption, a few bribed generals or judges or cabinet ministers, the normal incidents of a mercenary society such as are common enough in other places. We have plenty to regret in our foreign policy; but one source of our failures was a tendency to trust people who were not to be trusted, to forgive people by whom we were not forgiven, just because our normal public life at home has so long been free from gross fraud and sanguinary vindictiveness. Our long insular security, our sense of safety from foreign invasion and domestic treason, has had a profound effect on our way of life. It has left us not haunted by fears, a kindly and unsuspicious and honest—if perhaps a lazy and comfort-loving—people.

It is surely ridiculous to maintain that we are wicked or, in any ethical sense, less Christian than the times, say, of the Tudors or Charles II or the eighteenth century or the Regency. How often in reading history do we find ourselves almost unable to believe the low standard of public morals in this age or that! How often when we read the doings of some eighteenth- or seventeenth-century statesman do we reflect that a man who behaved like that nowadays would disappear in a few months in a blaze of scandal! Take conditions considered regular and normal in times quite near our own, before the reforms of the early nineteenth century. One instance may illustrate what I mean, a case cited from Hansard in the Preface to *Barnaby Rudge*: One Mary Jones, under nineteen, of perfectly good character, had her husband taken, quite legally, by the press gang; he being gone, she was left destitute and her goods were seized, quite legally, for some debts the husband owed. She with two infant children was, again legally, turned into the streets. After a period of homeless starvation she picked up some linen off the counter of a shop with intent to steal; the shopman saw her and she put the stuff back. For this she was, legally and correctly, hanged.

When brought to receive sentence she is said to have 'behaved in such a frantic manner as proved her mind to be in a distracted and despondent state'. A child was sucking at her breast when she set out for Tyburn. This string of infamies, observe, all took place in the due course of the law. No step was taken by any public authority to help Mary Jones or save her children after her. I take this case not in order to quote horrors, but merely as a type of the sort of thing that could be done before the liberalizing humanitarian movement of the nineteenth century, the movement whose children we are for good and for evil.

A queer misrepresentation is now fashionable about the nineteenth century, illustrated for example by Max Beer-bohm's famous caricature. It is represented as a period wrapped up in selfish thoughts of material prosperity; eminently self-satisfied because commerce was booming; indifferent to such things as intellectual or artistic progress or the sufferings of the oppressed poor. What nonsense, to speak thus of a period which covers not merely the first difficult struggle against the terrible by-products of the industrial revolution, but such advances as the abolition of slavery in its various stages, the sweeping reform of the old criminal law and the penal system that accompanied it; the reform in the treatment of lunatics; the invention of anaesthetics, with its immense psychological consequences, the triumphant purification of public life, the elaborate laws against cruelty to children and to animals; the whole series of Factory Acts; the emancipation of Catholics, Jews, Nonconformists, Women; the immense spread of education and of the care of public health, the beginnings of all the social services. During the same time the advance of science and material invention, it is admitted, was something unparalleled in history; and it was accompanied by a most wonderful flowering of British poetry and imaginative literature as well as considerable achievements both in art and philosophy. And when people speak so glibly of selfishness, it is surely worth remem-

bering that in practically all these movements of liberal reform we find the same process: members of a privileged class working to have their privileges abolished or extended to others. It was people who had the vote who worked to have the franchise given to the voteless; Christians who worked for the emancipation of the Jews, Protestants for the emancipation of the Catholics; members of the Church of England who abolished the Test Acts. The same with the legalization of Trade Unions, the abolition of Slavery, the protection of Native Races; always a privileged class giving up its privileges on grounds of conscience or humane principle.

No. It is not a bad and corrupt civilization of which we are the heirs and continuators; not an age which has deserved divine punishment for its selfishness and sin; not a commonplace and uninteresting age. It is a very splendid civilization, achieved by centuries of prolonged effort, a civilization with plenty of faults and weak spots, no doubt; when forty million human beings have to live together it would need a miracle to prevent them hurting each other; but at least a civilization with a most sensitive conscience about its own failures. If our critic takes a different line and says that the nineteenth century was all right; it is the present generation that is so specially deserving of chastisement from on high; he can perhaps make a more plausible case but it will be entirely irrelevant. The blow fell upon us in 1914. It is the pre-war liberal humanitarian civilization which is in question; not the comparatively few points in which we at the present day have under the perverting influence of war deviated from that great movement.

Is our national character so much changed? I greatly doubt it. It is more than a hundred years since Napoleon recognized us as 'the most consistent, the most implacable and the most generous of his enemies'. In the First World War I remember Sir Edward Grey telling me, with some pride, that while the enemy had made secret proposals for a

separate peace on advantageous terms to almost all our allies they never thought it worth while to dangle such temptations before the British. And in this war I think we can accept as true at least one of the comments of our South African philosopher-soldier, Field-Marshal Smuts, that the world has some reason to say 'God bless England', since it was our resistance alone, at a time when all hope seemed lost, that has probably—though not certainly—saved civilization from a Dark Age of 1,000 years. And I would venture to add an observation of my own. Together with that constancy of resolution, while there is in this country an immense and widespread interest in the settlement to be made after the War, the interest is almost entirely constructive: it is occupied with the healing of wounds, with reconstruction, with reconciliation, never with plans for elaborate revenge. Taken together these observations make a wonderful record; a record not to be complacent about, but to try in all humility to preserve and live up to.

Can we not shake ourselves free from irrelevant superstitions and party shibboleths? The evil thing that has happened to the world is war. War is not an outburst of hatred or passion—though it may cause such outbursts; it is a deliberate political act, decided on by a government after prolonged consideration, sometimes as a bold profitable adventure, but almost always as a great evil which is the only way to avert some greater evil. As to the cure for it, I have spoken and written so much on the subject, I will not discuss it now except to point out that it must be primarily a political cure, affecting international relations, not an ethical or religious cure affecting private morals, though, of course, any political cure must almost certainly have an ethical or religious basis. What we want is some international arrangement which will give honest governments some other way of averting the greater evils which they now regard as alternative to war, and at the same time—since ambitions and national passions have to be reckoned with—which will

provide some overwhelmingly strong deterrent to prevent any government from resorting in pursuit of its own interests to a measure so injurious to the rest of mankind. We need an alternative and a deterrent.

I want finally to consider two points: first, I would answer the objection that when we ask the cause of the bewildering maze of evils which now afflict the world the answer cannot be simply war. People say that is too easy an answer. The diagnosis must indicate some great complex of evils, social, moral, and permanent. Secondly I would point out a latent contradiction which still exists in the accepted standards of the average civilized man, a contradiction which is now being challenged and which it is the business of our generation to solve.

What is this strange thing we call war? War is the effort of some organized state to obtain or to avert some result by inflicting the maximum possible of evil, both material and moral, upon some other organized state, while the other state retaliates by similar action. This involves, in a modern highly organized community, the mobilization of every possible source of strength, military, industrial, and moral, and concentrating them to a degree never imagined in previous centuries on harming the enemy. This means that a stupendous mass of human effort which in normal times is, in a general way, devoted to increasing human welfare, is now re-directed with immense efficiency to the increase of human misery and degradation. Human communities become dangerous animals when the fear of war is upon them. Every instrument of human welfare, every invention which gives man more control over his environment, becomes a danger, an instrument of evil. The command of the air, which ought to be a means of knitting nations together, becomes a curse and a source of mutual terror. The possession of oil wells, of nickel, of tin, by one country becomes a threat to its neighbours. Nay, the same is true of a nation's virtues. At the time of the Disarmament Conference

the alleged industry, sobriety, and discipline of the Germans had seriously to be counted as an element in their war-potential and therefore as a public danger. On the same grounds the vices of a nation, if they are weakening vices, are a source of security to its neighbours; the Japanese do all they can to encourage opium-smoking in China, the Germans are destroying all serious books in the Polish language but are said to be encouraging those of a pornographic or demoralizing character. The fantastic economic misdoings which after the First World War led to such abysses of unemployment and inflation of currency, were all of them national attempts at self-defence against the war that loomed on the horizon. I do not for a moment underrate the social and economic difficulties with which reformers have to deal; I only insist that they are all caused or aggravated by war, and that you cannot deal with them at all while war or the fear of war continues, turning good to evil and evil into means of self-defence.

We must not be unfair. There are by-products of quite an opposite kind also. As regards social reform, extraordinary enterprise may be shown and risks taken under the pressure of war which may in some cases be permanently beneficial. As regards happiness, the fighting and adventurous instincts, much suppressed and starved in civilized life, obtain vent and encouragement; there is a vast amount of enjoyment in the thought, and sometimes in the actual experience, of a fight. Even as regards ethics, the herd instincts, with all that they imply of brotherly love and self-sacrifice, are immensely stimulated, and men perform in war acts of heroism and devotion for which there is little opportunity or inspiration in normal life. War in many ways raises the national morale; I agree; but it uses that high morale as an instrument for doing evil more effectively.

As I hinted before, war turns us all into fanatics. It produces in all of us such an overwhelming motive, that other motives and scruples cease to operate, and actions tend to be



judged simply by the test of whether they will help to win the war or not.

I say 'tend' because, thank Heaven, human nature is seldom blindly logical. I feel fairly sure that there are still a good many things which decent nations would not do, which it would not even occur to them to think of doing, even if it were profitable. Nevertheless, I doubt if there is anything from which any belligerent would abstain, or feel justified in abstaining, if he was convinced it would be really decisive. When we stand amazed, as we sometimes must, at the shameless lies, the monstrous and cold-blooded atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers on the Chinese, or by German officials on the Poles, the Czechs and, above all, the Jews; when we try vainly to understand how the young Germans we have known, or people like them, can have taken any hand in such things; it is worth while considering how far even the worst perfidies and cruelties are merely the direct result of a clear-sighted determination to do whatever is necessary for winning the War and establishing German supremacy. Once grant a certain fundamental assumption which the human race in general has usually accepted as a matter of course; grant that war is a legitimate method of policy and conquest the natural aim of a healthy and ambitious nation, there is, as far as I can see, hardly a single detail in the whole foul complex of Hitlerite villainies which is not justified, hardly a detail of which a devoted and conscientious young Nazi need feel ashamed. (I would except only a few insanities, like the madness of anti-Semitism.)

Start with the supposition with which the Nazis and most people in Germany do start. According to them the Germans are clearly not only the strongest, but on all grounds, moral and intellectual, the best nation in Europe; and he who says Europe says the world. Germany has thus a clear right to supremacy in Europe, and that supremacy can best be achieved by war, by the subjugation of rivals. This high task will need in the individual absolute discipline and

self-sacrifice; in the nation consummate organization for war, both psychological and material, including an omnipresent system of police to see there is no weakening. A hard and bloodstained road no doubt: but Germany, as Reventlow put it, 'must mount her Calvary'. War also needs diplomatic forethought; Germany's enemies—and to the would-be conqueror all neighbours are enemies—must be taken one by one; all except the one selected victim must be systematically deceived into trustfulness or, at worst, bullied into acquiescence.

The public opinion of the outer world must be conciliated or at least confused. Propaganda must be intense and systematic. Machinery for the suppression of inconvenient facts, the invention and broadcasting of useful falsehoods, is indispensable. All these are preliminary precautions.

When the war comes the Western nations can be Germanized or subjugated; all Latin peoples are decadent anyhow. But on the east there are the Slavs with their vast numbers, their rapid rate of increase and, amid all their incompetency, certain peculiar artistic and imaginative gifts. This is dangerous and cannot be tolerated. The spirit of these Slavs must be broken and their numbers reduced. Massacres and starvation will have their value but cannot be carried out on such a scale as to depopulate whole nations; more can be done by destroying the educated classes, by confiscating all property so that the survivors will be reduced to beggary, by destroying universities, schools, and books and so making the Poles and Czechs into slave races, useful servants and never rivals to the Germans. To put down resistance a revival of the practice of torture will be valuable. Many rebellious men and women will face death rather than betray their friends, but all can be broken down by long-continued torture, especially when accompanied by degrading outrages calculated to lower self-respect. These arts must be studied and perfected.

Unfortunately under the influence of modern Liberal

civilization all the peoples of western Europe have become averse to these practices, as they have indeed to war itself; consequently the young generation of German patriots must be systematically re-educated. They must learn to live for war; they must learn to enjoy violence, the shedding of blood and the infliction of suffering, for their own sake. Let them practise on the Jews as Ivan the Terrible was taught to practise on dogs. The Jews are unpopular and there are plenty of them. Their property can be confiscated and used for the war effort. The persecution of them as a lower race will emphasize the inherent superiority of the German over all lower forms of mankind, and make our youth ready for their glorious future. The education after all may not be so difficult. Killing for pleasure is one of the most widely recognized of human pastimes. It all hangs together. War is Hell. So a great soldier has told us; and the statesmen who would devote themselves to it must pursue the practices of Hell. Thus far the logic of the conqueror, the aggressor; but what of his victim, his most innocent victim? He too will soon be compelled to obey most of the same hellish decalogue. For the sake of his life and liberties, for the sake of duty and the honour of mankind, in order that all that is good in human nature may not be forced to obey the rule of all that is evil, the victim of war must resist; and, so far as human reason can see, war can only be resisted by its own weapons. When once war is accepted the principle of war as preached by Dr. Goebbels must be accepted: 'The thing that matters is not who is right; the thing that matters is who wins.'

People speak of this War as a War of Ideologies, and so it is. But not for a moment a war of Left against Right, Communist against Fascist, Catholic against Freethinker, nor yet of Freedom against Planning, or *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* against *Famille, Travail, Patrie*. I have heard Liberal Frenchmen and Italian *fascisti* hotly arguing whether the aim of society was the welfare of the Community or that of

the Individual, and have sat wondering what on earth they were striving about. I have heard people in the same voice proclaiming that we are fighting for Freedom and that we must maintain for ever all the prohibitions and controls of the War. Surely none of these differences is the vital issue. We are not waging war in order that one of these very imperfect and ill-defined systems shall prevail over the others. It would be madness to kill each other about such things. The only ideology that is worth fighting against is the ideology of war itself; the claim that to be right or do right does not matter; all that matters is to win; and that therefore all the hellish corollaries of that claim—the fraud, the treachery, the mass terror, the war itself with its slaughter backed by torture and massacre—shall be accepted as legitimate methods. It is that faith, that ideology, never revealed before in its full diabolical perfection, which, consciously or unconsciously, is rejected by the common sense as well as the conscience of civilized man.

Yet it still needs some deep uprooting: it is an old, old delusion long accepted by the human race, canonized by statues and monuments in all the capitals of the world, this belief that conquest is the supreme glory and the epithet 'Great' the perquisite *par excellence* and almost alone of the great conqueror. In that one point we need a clearing of the mind, a change of heart, a world-wide revolution. We need it and most of us have already moved some way towards attaining it. For the rest of our civilization and culture I believe we should be far more concerned to preserve than to overthrow.

That is why it is always so hard to say exactly what we are fighting for. We have so much that we must not allow to die. We fight for the Law, for the right to live in peace, for the whole principle of what we call in Europe 'Christian civilization' or humanity or even Hellenism, for the faith that there is a difference between Right and Wrong, between High and Low, and that the Right and the High are best. Most of the

current descriptions of the aim we are fighting for—for democracy, for the English way of life, for the American way of life, for the satisfaction of the common man, for a reign of plenty, for a world free from fear and want—leave me utterly dissatisfied. Most of them are ambiguous; some are utopian or demagogic. But when I hear mere praise of revolution and exhortations to cast this bad old civilization on the scrap-heap and create something entirely new, I confess a wave of indignation surges within me. Revolution is a common result of war, and not a good result. It is mostly a mere failure, through fatigue or cowardice, to face and control the mass of troubles that the war leaves behind it; it is always, like war itself, an appeal to force instead of right, to self-confident passion instead of thought and sympathy. All history shows how fatally easy it is for things of beauty, points of honour and chastity, scruples of truthfulness, unconscious customs of kindness, courtesy, and high thoughtfulness, to be overthrown by those who have not the sensitiveness to understand or the experience to appreciate them. Culture is something; civilization is something; the great historical tradition of western Europe, which we loosely call Christian, built up by the age-long labours and daring adventures of thinkers, saints, heroes, poets, sages, practical reformers, is surely a possession of extraordinary value. I would venture to call it the best practical answer yet discovered to the riddle of human life, its aim and its method. Experimental that tradition needs must be, self-criticizing, ever seeking new light and reformation and not afraid of change so long as the change is not a mere acceptance of inferior ways of life because they are easier or more acceptable to the common man. I would seriously ask the younger among my hearers, Can you save that civilization from decay and death?

I seem to see the last and the coming generations, my generation and yours, faced by two tremendous challenges. The task of mine was to put an end to war among civilized mankind; we have so far failed to do it, but I think we have

shown how it can be done. But at the end of this War, suppose some sort of peace and social security is achieved, how much will you find remaining of the higher civilization of Europe? The old centres of culture, Germany, Italy, and even France, will be almost without influence, and in Germany at least the intellectual forces of the nation have been mostly destroyed. The Nazis saw from the start that, both at home and abroad, their most dangerous enemy was the human intellect. We know how they have reduced their own universities from the leadership of Europe to a position of contempt. We know how murderously they have stamped out the intellectual life of Poland and Czechoslovakia, and to a lesser degree that of the other subject countries. The intellectual class in Russia was almost exterminated twenty years ago, and we do not know how far it has bloomed again. In Spain the intellectuals suffered more than any other class, and have largely perished. Where is the hope to come from? England, America, the precious remnant who have held out in the free countries of Europe, the scattered forces of the refugees: will that be enough, after the chaos, the impoverishment, the lowering of standards, the reign of violence, the concentration on the task of merely killing and not being killed, to restore the sense of honour and of beauty, the scrupulous conscience, the care for truth and justice, which our fathers honoured and we have not quite forgotten? Very formidable enemies are awaiting you. The forces of herd passion, the loud voices, the violent desires, the 'bitch-goddess' in all her forms, the habits of thought unconsciously inculcated by these years of barbarism; on the other side I see the great tradition, Hellenic and Christian, of which you are the living heirs, and the spirit of Man itself, with at least five thousand years of experience to guide it, which has long known these enemies and, with less powerful allies than you possess, has often conquered them before.

## VII

### A CONVERSATION WITH BRYCE

IT is a special pleasure to me to be invited to give this address, associated with the name of one whom I regarded for many years both as a friend and a teacher. He was kind to me when he was a professor and I an undergraduate, I stayed with him in Washington when he was British Ambassador, and we gave each other mutual support and encouragement when I was drawing near to my sixties and he to his eighties. Without any eccentricities or striking personal characteristics, he was one of the most remarkable men of his time. To the more dashing political reformers of the day, who dared to believe in Woman Suffrage and even Women's Universities, in Universal Suffrage, in Home Rule for Ireland, in the organization of peace, in all kinds of movements for the help of the oppressed of the earth, he was an invaluable asset, just because he was so completely unlike the wild-eyed Radical. He was Scottish, sober, cautious, and extremely learned. It was said of him that to him all facts were born free and equal. He remembered them all alike. As to education, he once told me that he considered the old Scottish University course, with its seven compulsory subjects—Latin, Greek, mathematics, moral philosophy, natural philosophy, logic, and English—seven sound subjects and no nonsense—was the best educational training in the kingdom. The way in which he preserved his health was characteristic. In his early twenties doctors had warned him that his heart was weak. He must be careful to rest and avoid all strain. 'But I reflected', he said, 'that the heart was a muscle, and that a weak muscle is usually made strong by graduated exercise.' So, instead of rest, he took graduated exercise, steadily increasing up to the point when he made the first ascent of Mt. Ararat. His heart learnt its lessons and did its duty till he died in his sleep at the age of 84. His sight and

hearing were apparently perfect. I was once, with him in a train and noticed that he did not read his newspaper. I asked him if he found he could not read in the train. 'I can', he said, 'but I think my eyes will last better if I don't.' And so they did.

It was said of Mr. Gladstone that one of his weaknesses as a statesman—if it was a weakness—was that he was never clear about a political question until he had somehow formed it into a moral issue, a question of right and wrong. I think that much the same was true of Bryce. Like Aristotle, he saw politics as simply the ethics of the State, the problem of how the State should do its duty. And to him the guide was the liberal but austere Christian ethic which, not much confused by any emphasis on dogma, he had learnt from his Scottish Presbyterian upbringing. He became gradually recognized by oppressed or suffering people all over the world as the friend to turn to for sympathy and advice; for practical help, too, when help was feasible. Armenians, Macedonians, Koreans, sufferers from famine and flood or from human persecution in the Turkish and Russian Empires, all, so to speak, stood in his ante-room or covered his desk with their letters. One day shortly after his death, when calling on Lady Bryce, I passed a Japanese on the stairs. He had come, Lady Bryce told me, to pay a visit of respect to Bryce's grave; but, finding a bronze bust of him in the room, he was content with that. He took out a tray, burnt some incense upon it, spoke some Japanese formula of worship, bowed three times, and went his way. Verily, the actions of the just do 'smell sweet and blossom in the dust'!

Once, at the end of the First World War, I was walking away with Bryce from a meeting at which I had used some phrase about our immediate goal having been reached; the future could not yet be seen, but Great Gates, as it were, were slowly opening before us. As we went he spoke of the Great Gates and what things their opening might reveal. We had won the War. We had seen the start of the League of Nations and



had hopes—how could we help having such hopes?—that after four years of war and its miseries the rulers of nations would see that law was better than anarchy, and would be ready for the sake of peace to conduct their policies as good neighbours should. Yet all the time at the back of our minds was the misgiving that the liberal principles on which his activities and mine had been based had fewer and fewer supporters. The liberal nations happened to have won the War. But clearly it was mainly their force and wealth, not their justice or liberality, that had saved them. Might not the lesson of the War be read as amounting just to that shattering discovery? Did it perhaps show that our liberal or ideal or Christian faith in justice, in brotherhood, in generosity, in care for others, was a childish thing, based on the delusions of the nursery; that a true standard of values would put first military power, next economic power, and third, perhaps, resolute determination unenfeebled by scruples of honour or conscience? Were our own high-sounding principles and ideals just forms of superficial drawing-room politeness, making life pleasanter when nothing serious was at stake, and sometimes useful for deceiving the enemy, a thin and transparent veil over the eternal biological battle of all against all, for life, for food, for greatness? Could the world turn back from war and the habits of war before some such gospel of evil was permanently engraved upon its mind?

That ultimate question can, perhaps, never be solved, either by metaphysics or by biology. It must be left to that gambler in uncertainties called Faith. But the talk I then had with Bryce suggests to me a discussion of the same problem as it affects the present situation and what I will venture to call the liberal outlook which Bryce and I shared. Why is it, for example, that in every country the Liberal parties, once so strong, have almost withered to nothing, while at the same time the leaders of the United Nations assert passionately from time to time that they are fighting for liberal

principles? Must we not conclude that there is here something temporary that is no longer useful and something permanent which must be preserved? But let me explain—shall I say, to an unbelieving generation?—what to me is the meaning of Liberalism, or, as Mr. Gladstone used to call it, Liberality. *Liberalis* does not mean ‘a believer in liberty’; it means ‘like a free man’. Most men are not free: they are the slaves of their customs and prejudices, their passions, their interests, above all, of their fears. A Liberal is one who tries to throw off all those slaveries, and to think and act ‘like a free man’. His weakness as contrasted with the Conservative—apart from ordinary weaknesses common to all human nature—has been to think too much in terms of abstract reason and to undervalue the immense framework of tradition and custom without which no human society can keep its health. He gives more allegiance to justice, truth, kindness, and the moral ideal than he does to custom, order, the constitution, established dignities and sanctities, the traditional expectations and habits of the ordinary man. And, of course, those things are enormously important and always decide about 90 per cent. of a nation’s thoughts and actions. I do not suggest that Bryce suffered from this weakness; he was too good a historian to do so; but he did markedly bring political questions before the bar of ethics.

Now the first point I wish to suggest is that this standard, uncertain as it often is, is ultimately the only one to apply, and that in great crises, like that in which we live, every political party, so far as it dares to think honestly, begins to find most of its party cries lose their meaning and fail to give guidance. Only the deeper issues remain; and the deepest issue of all is that of the acceptance or non-acceptance of some moral standard. Are politics merely a struggle for power and wealth or a continuous effort to obey some moral law and attain some good life?

The commonest of all mistakes in a rapidly changing world is to be ‘behind the times’. Almost all people, when faced by

some new troublous situation, begin by applying to it some remedy that had proved good for some different trouble in the past. Liberals are not immune from this failing. The great work of Liberalism in the nineteenth century was a work of liberation, emancipation, assistance to those struggling to be free, and in general a movement towards independence and against authority. Many of the causes are won or almost won. To take two famous slogans: *laissez-faire*, or freedom to manufacture; *laissez-passer*, or freedom for goods from the country to enter towns without paying octroi, are so completely won that people have utterly forgotten what the phrases mean, and talk as if the one meant *let people do as they like*, and the other *let things pass without making a fuss*. Other freedoms no doubt have still to be fought for; still more have been lost again and must be reconquered. But in the main the need of the civilized world has changed. It is no longer independence; it is co-operation; not an escape from too oppressive laws, but an establishment of law in place of anarchy. This point most people who think freely have recognized, but it means an enormous change of attitude.

A more difficult problem is the whole plight of democratic and parliamentary government. In Bryce's day it was an accepted principle that parliamentary democracy was the only normal form of government for civilized countries and as such was gradually spreading over the world. By the middle of the inter-war period it looked as if, so far from spreading, it was failing everywhere, though I remember the historian Ferrero, at Geneva, explaining to me indignantly that parliamentary government had never failed where it was really indigenous or had had a long period of growth behind it, as in England, France, Belgium, and the Scandinavian monarchies, not to speak of the United States. It had failed in Italy, Germany, Russia, Spain, the Balkan countries, because, as people say of Christianity, 'it had never been tried'. I am not sure whether Ferrero would have admitted

that, at best, it was a system extremely difficult to learn, and indeed impossible without a general standard of honesty far higher than is required under a despotism and higher than exists in most countries. I am not sure whether he would now speak with the same confidence about France. A country which believes, rightly or wrongly, that its parliamentary system is corrupt and a large number of its representatives actually in receipt of bribes, can hardly be called in evidence on behalf of the parliamentary system. A case may even be made against England, the central citadel of parliamentary government. A system which for twenty vitally important years kept unshakably in office a government which was in a decided minority in the country can hardly be said to be working well. But I believe a far deeper and more alarming lesson is to be learnt from certain phenomena in the United States. That country is the very Mecca of democracy. It rises in enthusiasm to cheer the very name. But, oddly enough, it never cheers the word 'politics' or 'politician'! No American likes to be called a politician. Yet politics are the natural field and stronghold of democracy. We have just been warned by Raymond Gram Swing and others that for the next year or so public interest in the U.S.A. will be concentrated on the Presidential Election, and that we need not mind what mischievous things the competing statesmen may say. They will only be angling for votes and will mean no harm. That is a shock, yet I cannot help asking whether we are not bound to go a great deal farther. How do we explain a phenomenon like the city of Chicago? A government elected on the most perfectly democratic system, yet, according to accounts given me by American friends, recognized to be almost as bad as a government can be; universally condemned, yet with such a grip on the machine as to be practically irremovable. If at the same time Chicago is a grand and prosperous city, a leader in industry and commerce, with one of the greatest universities in the world—must we give thanks for that mainly to the continuous work

of private citizens, many of them engaged—*horribile dictu!*—in ‘big business’? Is that the effect, or at least at the present time a rather frequent effect, of democracy, that determined rogues manage to capture the government, while the more decent men do not care to be mixed up in ‘politics’, but prefer to attend to their own affairs?

Let us consider this point carefully. What is it that gives the gangster his power at all? A very simple and extremely important fact about human nature. As long as people on both sides care more or less equally about the things on which they vote, the majority has its way; but when once there is a minority caring so intensely for some purpose of its own that it is ready to organize, to intrigue, to fight, and to stick at nothing, it can beat any sluggish and contented majority. Lenin calculated that the Communist party numbered about 10,000 when, by ruthless and organized violence, they seized the control of 160 million Russians. I once asked Breitscheid, the leader of the German Social Democrats, how it was that his party, with its greatly superior numbers, was so quickly beaten by the Hitlerites and Communists. ‘They went about armed’, he said, ‘and killed on the slightest provocation. My people were constitutional and insisted that all parties should abide by the law.’ Once, about the year ’35 or ’36, when Arnold Toynbee was about to have a private interview with Hitler, a hitch occurred at the last moment. It was discovered that in the *Annual Survey* Toynbee had accused Hitler of using ‘gangster methods’. Hitler, however, when shown the passage, made no objection to it. He had used gangster methods, he admitted; but whereas the gangster used such methods for personal gain, he used them, so he professed, only for the welfare of his country. Mussolini confessedly seized power by the use of an armed *Fascio*, which after all is only the Italian for ‘gang’.

A very large part of the civilized and formerly democratic world is now under the heel of gangsters, that is, of bands of men organized with intense determination and utter absence

of conventional scruples, to seize power and hold it by the destruction or 'liquidation' of possible rivals. How has this happened? Are these bands, these tiny minorities, exceptionally enterprising and talented and determined, beyond, say, any similar bands in the nineteenth century? To some extent we can say, Yes. The general economic distress made people more ready to react to fraud and violence. There was desperate intensity of feeling in the Bolshevik Revolution because of the extraordinary sufferings of the Russian common soldier in the First World War. There was desperate intensity of feeling behind Hitler when he proclaimed to his beaten and humiliated people a policy of heroic and almost incredible adventure. But in Italy, in Chicago, in pre-War France, in Japan, in the various Quisling countries, was there any such intense and heroic passion in the aggressors? I doubt it. At any rate, the most important factor was probably on the other side of the account. In the great mass of the people there was a fatal lack of the sense of public duty and patriotism. Was it a sufficient answer to my question, for Breitscheid to say that the Social Democrats were unarmed while their enemies were armed? Why did they allow that state of things to occur? As for Italy, I remember attending a midnight meeting of Fascists at Lerici, all handsomely equipped with torches and thrilling speeches and talk of the coming Roman Empire and the expulsion of the Anglo-Saxons from *mare nostrum*. At the close, when the audience was passionately exhorted to rise and cheer as one man, and one expected a great demonstration, about a quarter of those present responded, and I looked round in surprise to see a throng of rather amused and tolerant faces, suggesting that the performance was not a bad performance, but no particular business of theirs. Why should they bother? There was universal suffrage. Each man's vote was infinitely unimportant in its effect, so why should he behave as if he had real responsibility? It was easy and safe to let the gangsters do as they liked, and it might be dangerous

to thwart them. The mental attitude in each country was much the same as that which we saw later in the civilized world as a whole. In every nation there was disapproval of the gangster aggressions; disapproval of the wrongs done to Manchuria, to China, to Abyssinia, to Spain, to Czechoslovakia, but never enough civil courage and sense of public duty to make the law-abiding nations combine in defence of the law. In some cases no doubt heroism would have been needed. The man who opposed the gang had sometimes to be ready to face death. But in most of the great public failures that have brought the present world to disaster, it was not so much individual heroism that was lacking. It was a widespread decent standard of citizenly duty. Without that standard democracy cannot be a success. And it must be confessed that such a standard is harder to maintain in a democracy than an oligarchy. The immensely diluted responsibility which lies on the individual citizen in any large democracy discourages him from taking trouble about public affairs. It is not as if his knowledge or ignorance, or even his honesty or dishonesty, would really make any particular difference to the country's welfare!

There is permanently this possible weakness in democracy. It needs virtue, but does not make much special appeal to virtue. But why, we must ask, this sudden collapse at the present day? Why have our modern democracies, after such long success and apparent solidity, been struck with such sudden and alarming disasters now? Can we see any special reason applying particularly to the present time?

The natural tendency of people in public trouble is to look for the cause of the trouble in their own nation and in conditions they can 'do something about'—in the errors of the opposite party, in their own failure to assert themselves as they should, in the wickedness of the people whom they disapprove, and the like. There are many such explanations current now, all self-regarding or self-interested, and not based on any objective evidence. I will in passing notice just

two of them. First, the religious explanation. All periods of danger and terror produce a longing for supernatural protection, a revival of superstitious practices, an interest in signs and omens, and, of course, also an eagerness to repent—or, better still, make others repent—of sins which caused no great anxiety before. We have all noticed symptoms of this feeling, from the somewhat exaggerated piety of the B.B.C. to the increased popularity of astrology, spiritualism, and various impassioned doctrines about the Pyramids, the Lost Tribes, and the Second Coming. There has even been, what would seem almost incredible, a revival of the Black Mass and Devil worship, such as occurred in the Thirty Years War. So we need not, I think, be surprised at the widespread tendency to assert that the miseries of the world, and in particular the double relapse into war, are due to some general lapse from Christian piety and regular religious observances. Of course, there is always value in a call to repentance; it is true that we all have habits that require correction; there is no doubt of that. But I do not see any evidence whatever connecting religious scepticism with war. As a matter of fact, in most countries the forces most devoted to peace were the Radical and Socialist parties, which were apt to be anti-clerical. The Conservative and orthodox parties were generally the most nationalist.

That explanation then was bound to occur; it always does occur in times of great fear. There is another fashionable explanation, equally self-regarding and much more influenced by self-interest, which is peculiar to our own time. This generation is obsessed by thoughts of economics; and our disasters have come upon us at a time when a strong Socialist movement has been sweeping through many of the nations of Europe. The Socialist parties had long been enthusiastically engaged in pointing out, often in a most convincing way, the various social disorders that resulted from what they call Capitalism, when suddenly a new and overwhelming disaster from a new quarter fell on the world. It was, I



suppose, inevitable that Socialists should say that, being bad, it must be due to Capitalism. They are then faced by various disturbing facts. For one thing, they can hardly help seeing that the two most markedly peace-loving powers are also the most markedly Capitalist, the British Commonwealth and the United States. Also that in Europe the chief war-makers have a system which calls itself Socialist, which is beyond doubt violently anti-Capitalist, and is in many ways closely similar to that of Communist Russia, at any rate in its totalitarian government and its almost complete suppression of private initiative. One cannot help noticing also that the Union of Soviet-Socialist Republics, excellent as its advocacy of indivisible peace has often been, has made three definitely aggressive wars, against Finland, Poland, and the Baltic States respectively, and when it defends them does so for purely militarist reasons of power politics. Nor is the programme of attaining ultimate peace by making forcible revolutions in some seventeen different countries one that is likely to seem attractive to an objective observer.

A less crude theory which comes from the same quarters is that all wars are made for economic motives. This, of course, is deduced from the Marxian doctrine of Economic Determinism; it could never have been reached by simple observation. Any disinterested study of the history of recent wars shows that the theory is simply not true nor even plausible. The only war of this century in which economic or commercial motives played any large part is probably the South African War, where the objection of the mine-owners to Krüger's taxation counted for something, though not for very much, in the minds of Milner and Chamberlain. But it is curious how this dogma is asserted as an article of faith superior to mere facts. It becomes a pure myth. Take, for example, Bernard Shaw's remark that 'The hideous war of 1914-1918 was at bottom a fight between the capitalists of England, France, and Italy on the one hand and those of Germany on the other for the command of African markets'.

Compare that with the actual facts. In the background, of course, was the immense ambition of the German Empire, but as to the events let us take them in sequence. The heir to the Austrian throne was murdered by a gang of Serbs. Austria had long been afraid of having the Empire broken up by the secession of its non-German elements, and considered that a complete crushing of the whole Serbian nation was necessary for her prestige and preservation. Russia, for similar reasons of prestige, felt bound to save her special protégé, Serbia, from such utter destruction, and demanded an International conference. Germany, from more aggressive motives of prestige, thought a conference would be a humiliation to her chief partner in Europe, and decided that the great 'Day' had arrived. And what about the English, French, and Italian capitalists? England and France worked day and night to save the peace by every proposal that could be thought of. Italy was determined to be neutral at all costs and broke her treaties in order to be so. And what had the trade of Africa to do with it at all? Both Britain and Germany followed Open-Door policies, and had nothing to gain by war against each other. France, indeed, was protectionist; and if England and Germany had gone to war against France, trade with Africa might have been a conceivable motive, but they did not. Mr. Shaw's picture does not touch reality at any single point. The truth is that, among all the manifold motives that enter into the great force of national ambition and drive nations into aggressive war, direct economic motives seldom count for much.

It is all very well, you may say, for me to reject these explanations as 'interested' or 'self-regarding'; what disinterested explanation have I to offer of the peculiar dangers that have shaken the great Liberal civilization of the nineteenth century? I would suggest one that seems to me obviously true in fact and perfectly normal in human history.

All through the course of history, though more clearly the farther back you go, you find a certain rise and fall of

empires. More precisely, you see some one nation in preponderant power in some area, and then another nation gradually increasing in strength till a crisis arrives and there is a fight for supremacy. In antiquity and up to quite modern times it was accepted as a normal thing that every healthy nation should try to increase its domains and conquer its neighbours. Aggression was the normal duty of a vigorous and patriotic king. The councillors of Xerxes in the fifth century before Christ gave their king exactly the same advice as Bismarck gave to his king in the nineteenth century after. 'All your ancestors have increased their territory by war; you will be disgraced if you do not do the same.' We all take this succession of empires for granted: Babylon, Assyria, Medes and Persians; Alexander, Rome . . . each fighting the last not so much because of any particular *casus belli* or practical clash of interest, but, as a matter of course, for the sake of *ἀρχή*, Empire, *Weltmacht*. Sometimes the decision was rapid, sometimes prolonged through war after war, as between Rome and Carthage. It is a well-attested tradition of antediluvian antiquity, which has lasted on from the times of Sargon the First to those of Louis XIV, Napoleon, and Bismarck, and which many peoples and governments still regard as eternal.

Now, from that point of view, it is clear that the Europe of the twentieth century was in a state of highly unstable equilibrium. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the British Empire was the leading world power. The British fleet maintained a world-wide *Pax Britannica*, in which the other great English-speaking Power exercised a kind of partial and informal partnership. British power was steadily expanding in remote and unoccupied parts of the world and in territories occupied by nations of a lower or less orderly material civilization, though it was remarkably unaggressive towards what it regarded as the civilized nations. It was remarkably guiltless of intrigue. It gave complete freedom to the trade of all countries. It never caused any

anxiety to the Dutch or Portuguese or Belgian or Danish colonies. Nay, it was so confident of its security that it allowed its army to sink to the level of a fifth-rate power and left its great Asiatic empire almost unguarded. It had no need of guards; the territories it administered were all fairly contented, or contented themselves with parliamentary opposition of the kind they had seen praised in books of English history. Was this the self-confidence of strength or the mere decadence of an over-rich, self-indulgent, undisciplined pluto-democracy? Who could say?

Meanwhile a nation had risen in the heart of Europe which could and did put forward a strong claim, both material and moral, to supersede Great Britain as a world power and to inherit her empire. Germany in 1914 was extremely prosperous. She had already outstripped Great Britain in wealth, exports, and industry. She had twice the population and more than twice the territory of England. She had a fleet equal to the British and an army incomparably stronger. Her universities were the intellectual centre of Europe, if not of the world. Her people, she claimed, were better educated, better disciplined, more frugal, and more accustomed to hardship, than the English. And Germany had always accepted without question the so-called Prussian tradition, which is really the primeval tradition of mankind, that national superiorities must be settled and proved by war. War with Britain was an inevitable historic necessity, nay, an inevitable national Duty. *Weltmacht oder Niedergang!*

At a later time, if we look outside Europe, we find that Japan, in her own sphere, was in much the same position. A great military tradition; a history of unbroken success in war, culminating in a decisive victory over the immense empire of Russia; a fleet by 1940 equal to any in the world; a splendid army; a great industrial development; a people admirably industrious and disciplined, with an almost inhuman power of obedience to the point of death. How could they help

thinking that they could cut through the unwarlike millions of China like a knife through butter and sweep away in a few months the indolent and almost unarmed British settlements which maintained an arrogant alien dominion over millions of Asiatics? Surely the course of history demanded a change in the whole world order. The balance of actual strength was already reversed. Germany, now recovered from her defeat in 1918, was the true master of Europe, Japan the true master of Asia. Standing together they were invincible; all that remained was to prove their superiority by blood and iron.

That fact, surely, is the great cause, almost the sole cause, of the world's trouble in the twentieth century, the fact that two highly militarist nations have risen to great heights of strength, are intensely conscious of that strength, and are doing their worst—their terrific worst—to destroy the world-power of the Anglo-Saxons and succeed to their heritage. It is that great historical crisis—not the faults of Capitalism, or Democracy, or Liberalism, or Puritanism, or Socialism, or the British ruling class, or any other of our private *bêtes noires*—that is the cause of the outward calamities and inward distractions that have fallen upon this martyred generation. There is no warrant for any wholesale condemnation of modern civilization, no warrant for rejecting our own ideals of progress, humanity, and justice.

This conclusion, based, I think, on simple consideration of the facts and many statements of German and Japanese leaders, is greatly comforting. It makes our sufferings intelligible. It saves us from self-distrust and despair. At the same time, it does suggest one great misgiving. Are we to accept this struggle-for-life between nations as an inevitable natural phenomenon? Is this succession of Empires, this series of military conquests, which has prevailed so long and so widely, to be accepted as something ingrained in human nature and inescapable? The answer is, quite simply: No; Germany and Japan are behind the times. Most of the

civilized world has grown out of these barbaric ideas. For example, the last fifty years have seen the United States outgrowing the British Empire in wealth, population, industrial resources, military and naval strength, yet neither party has thought of declaring war on the other. The three thousand miles of undefended frontier are not a sign of the meek and gentle nature of Canadians and Americans; they are the sign of a certain stage of human civilization, a stage which most nations of the civilized world have now reached. All nations, of course, have their ambitions and vanities and divergent interests. But those that we call civilized are not, as a rule, disposed, in order to satisfy them, to use a method materially so expensive, morally so revolting, socially so charged with human misery and degradation, and always so uncertain in its results, as organized war has become in any modern industrial state. Furthermore, with the process of civilization, we have become more analytic in our thought. Civilized nations do not think of one another as simply master or servant, victor or vanquished; they see that one nation may excel in one thing and another in something different, and thus each preserve its own special interests and national pride. I need hardly add that, as a matter of fact, various necessities and conveniences, both material and intellectual, are gradually compelling the nations of Western Europe and North and South America into ever closer policies of co-operation and good-neighbourship, a process utterly destructive of the old militarist nationalism.

So far so good. Though no doubt we all have our vices, personal and social, and would do well to repent of them, we can breathe freely. The war is not the result of our awful inward corruption. The evil is a wound, not a sepsis. But of course most wounds have a tendency to produce sepsis; and, if the war is not the result of our wickedness, a great deal of wickedness may well be the result of our wars.

I am anxious here to give the devil his due. I admit that a balance sheet might conceivably be drawn up showing the

self-sacrifice and the cruelty, the heroism and the villainy, even the high spirits and the despair caused by war, though I cannot imagine that there would be any approach to equality in the two columns. But there is a further item, hard to calculate, which we have to take into consideration. The killing will perhaps soon cease. The starvation may be healed somewhat later. But what about the effect upon society of having trained successive generations of young men to take pride in fighting power and in practically nothing else? To enjoy the infliction of death and suffering, not only on active enemies, but sometimes on helpless human creatures who have no power of hitting back? What of the experts in bayonet use? The submarine officers who come back in triumph flying the skull and cross-bones? What of the immense armies of bombers? What of the commando troops, trained in forty-one different ways of killing men with bare hands or otherwise? What of the clamorous and adoring crowds behind them? There are criminals, lots of them, in every population. There are criminal instincts, lots of them, in every individual. And for some time we have been lavishing our admiration and encouragement on activities that in a normal society would be extreme forms of crime.

War is, no doubt, a tremendous experience. I can well believe that the experience of facing death and extreme suffering for one's country, of giving all that one possesses, of striving to the very last extremity of physical and mental strength, if taken rightly, must be of immense moral value to anyone; a moral value to which we civilians have never been required to rise; yet it seems certain that a prolonged state of war, with its unwholesome strain, and its extraordinary reversal of normal moral values, has a terrible effect upon mankind.

Europe has now had, as Field-Marshal Smuts has reminded us, thirty years of war or the shadow of war, times when the planning of war or the dread of war was continuously poisoning thought and perverting policy. More than

half of our present population has no memory of a normal carefree social order, in which peace was safe, steady progress a natural expectation, and spies and informers, passports and torture-chambers, belonged to the regions of romantic fiction. Yet that is the state of life which my generation once had, and which you must one day recover. Smuts's phrase makes one recall that twice before in European history there has been a similar period of war, the Thirty Years War from 1618 to 1648, which ruined central Europe for many generations and produced effects lasting to the present day, and the Twenty-seven Years War between Athens and Sparta, from which Greek civilization never recovered. Small and ineffective things, those wars, if compared with the wars of the present day, yet in their social and psychological effects they may have been much the same. There were the same almost incredible horrors; I will not dwell on them. Those of the Thirty Years War are recorded in contemporary pictures of massacre and torture, and in such literature as the *Travels of Simplicissimus*. 'It is impossible', says Mr. Fisher, 'to exaggerate the miseries which the helpless peasants of the German empire were compelled to endure in these iron times. There was marauding. There was starvation. There was even cannibalism. Whole villages died out, and, as is always the case in times of extreme and desperate calamity, moral restraints broke down and ceded to wild bursts of profligacy.' A no less grim account of the moral perversion produced by the long Peloponnesian War is given in certain unforgettable chapters of Thucydides, particularly in book iii, 82 ff., and the Melian dialogue. Both wars illustrate the essential fact that, whatever the original, or alleged original, cause of any war, it settles down in time to the mere pursuit of what Thucydides calls *archê*, mastery: the mere question of We or They. The war becomes a long organized effort to do the very maximum of evil on a gigantic scale to other human beings, and an acceptance of effectiveness towards that end as the prime test of value. I will not



dwell on those evils, but as we are now thinking of our own future I will ask you to consider for a few minutes the conditions that followed the other two wars. Both were followed by an intense moral reaction, taking the most varied forms. That is a most important fact. Human nature does react against such things. Cruel as we humans are, we are gregarious animals and cannot live permanently in hatred of our fellows.

Take as a type of this moral reaction the words of Comenius:

I see my country, her churches and her schools, all in ruins. Yet, when the fire of war was spreading beyond her borders to seize first the neighbouring countries and then the whole of Europe, and threatening the whole Christian world with disaster and desolation, I had no greater comfort than I found in the ancient promises of God concerning the supreme and final light that should in the end conquer darkness. And if any human aid were needed for this, I thought it could only come from the better instruction of the young in all matters.

How familiar it sounds! One might think it was Plato himself speaking, after the earlier war. One might think it was one of a score of present-day societies, British, American, and international, for the re-education and regeneration of Europe. More important even than Comenius, we have in 1625 the epoch-making assertion of a moral law, superior to all national ambitions, by Grotius, *De Jure Pacis et Belli*. We have a little later the reaction against war in any form, by Quakers like John Woolman and William Penn, and on different lines, Voltaire's striking article on *Guerre* in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*. In the general conviction of the enlightened eighteenth-century, religious wars at any rate were, as Pope says, a matter for 'fools and bigots'.

In the Greek world the reaction is clearer still. The beginning is Disillusion. All the great schools of thought that fill the fourth century agree in the repudiation of all those worldly aims for which wars were fought. They appealed, as

we seem to appeal now, to the consciences of individual men and women against the doings of states and nations. The world goes its mad way and cannot be stopped, but its values are all seen to be wrong. Plato and Aristotle indeed try hard in their different ways to discover or devise that strange thing, a Righteous City. But far more characteristic of the fourth century is the profound reaction against the state and the world, and all the aims of 'power politics', which reveals itself in the great idealist schools of philosophy. They all pronounce that the currency of this world is worthless. For some schools nothing is of any value except Virtue, nothing but the soul counts, nothing but goodness is good; whether we understand goodness in its crudest and most primitive form, like the cynics, or allow it to develop into a perfection of man's most human activities, like the Stoics. For others, nothing is of value but Pleasure, or literally *ἡδονή*, 'Sweetness', the word being understood as an inward peace dependent on temperate desires, friendship or kindly feeling towards other men, and, above all, freedom from fear. The schools might fight one another; but in general all were united against the ambitions of the world. It was only here and there, against great odds, that a philosopher, or a prince with philosophic tastes, made any serious attempt by practical reforms to moralize the turbid flood of public life. Most characteristic of all is the great Stoic doctrine of the ideal City, the true City of the Cosmos, in which not only all men, but both men and gods are citizens. That it is real, is shown by the fact that all men can see Reason, all have the sense of justice and injustice; but it exists not on this earth; only in the Love, *ἔρως*, the passionate longing, with which the baffled and defeated heart of man still hopes for it.

I need not press this argument. The three Thirty Years Wars are alike in the demoralization and misery which they cause; alike in the intense moral and idealist reaction by which they are followed; the first two have been alike in the general defeat of that idealism and the relapse of the nations

concerned into ways much the same as before, if not worse. In each case the Great War was followed by strings of lesser wars, by futile faction fights and proletarian revolutions, atrocities repressed by atrocities, and all the evils which we now see threatening and are anxious to avoid. Is there any reason to hope that our own fortune may be different? I think there is.

What ground have we for hope? I would say, just this. After those previous long wars there was abundance of goodwill and idealism in human beings; failure came because there was no organization capable of putting that goodwill into effect. The state was still for the most part merely a killing-machine, good at that particular job, but miserably incompetent in grappling with problems of social welfare or international organization. Take one extreme example. Among the contemporary pictures of society in the Thirty Years War some of the most striking show soldiers plundering villages and then, with far more gusto, villagers hunting out disbanded soldiers and beating them to death or breaking them on the wheel. That was happening all over Central Europe. Why? Because the armies had no proper commissariats. They got their food by plundering. Because also there was no systematic provision for demobilization. Soldiers were turned loose to live by murder and robbery or any other device they could find. It would not be difficult to find somewhat similar disorders after the Peloponnesian War. To see how enormous is the difference between those times and these it is enough to glance at one or two recent state documents: say, the Report of the Hot Springs Conference on plans for the organization of the agriculture and food supply of the world, and the more critical Report on the Transition from War to Peace Economy published by the Economic and Financial Commission of the League of Nations at Princeton. You are in a different world. The modern state, even though now for the moment definitely organized to the last button as a killing-machine, is far more

at home in the work of constructive organization, economic research, social service, care of health, provision against fear and want. The sort of work that we shall have to undertake, amid many dangers and on a gigantic scale, is just the work for which, in contrast to these earlier times, we are splendidly equipped.

Of course there has been much foolish boasting, much not quite honest political 'salesmanship', in the forecasts and promises of a 'Better World' with which various voices encourage us. As peace seems to come nearer we are perhaps beginning to realize the problems and dangers it will bring. The frightful legacy of material and moral destruction that will be left by the war; the danger involved in any recovery of German strength, and yet the impossibility of European peace while the greatest of European nations is left outcast, filled with hostile fury and bitter longings for revenge; the many deep-seated antagonisms between those whom we expect to work together; the high probability of opposing aims which may break up the solidarity of the four principal Allies; the possibility of smaller national wars or, worse still, civil wars, breaking out in various parts of Europe.

For us university people—you will allow me to say 'us' though I personally shall not be with you—for us there is one particular obstacle to be confronted and one particular duty to be sustained. We must not let ourselves be proletarianized. War obliterates the finer values of life. It values power, force, the combative spirit. It values numbers, money, mechanics, advertisement; and worships, above all things, what William James has called 'that bitch goddess, Success'. A nation with thirty years of war in its bones may well be repelled, rather than attracted, by many of the things that you and I have been taught to value most, a scrupulous conscience, a care for truth, and a desire for justice. It may well be indifferent to beauty and art and all such knowledge as is not immediately practical. The masses will be always power-

ful; organized wealth will be always powerful; and both will have been taught to fight and to advertise. Those great forces will sometimes clash, sometimes combine; and neither probably will care much for many things that we believe to be essential to a good life.

In many countries of Europe the intellectual class has been almost exterminated, everywhere it has been weakened. In some cases perhaps it deserved its fate, for there are few things more repulsive than an intelligentsia which, beginning with a contempt for bourgeois tastes, has proceeded to a contempt for citizenly morals and duties, and thus made itself a false guide, a traitor to the main hope and effort of mankind. But the general loss through the destruction of the educated classes has been tragic, and nowhere more tragic than in those countries which used in old days to carry the torch highest—France, Germany, Italy.

Going back to that conversation with Bryce from which these reflections started, I seem to feel that in the difficult days ahead of us one of the main dangers will be a constant pressure to lower all our standards to what is easy, to what pays, to what suits the momentary taste of great majorities. Already one's heart sometimes sinks while listening to the sort of thing that the B.B.C., with all its experience and intelligence, finds suitable for 'the common man', and reflecting that, according to all the best prophets, the common man is to be the dominant power of the coming age. The century, they say, will be his. It is there that our work will come in. Living, as we do, so largely outside the struggle for material ends, among the great thoughts and achievements of the spirit of Man during these last few thousand years of his pilgrimage, let it be ours to recognize that which is higher than ourselves, to love, to understand, to revere; and to keep alive in the world those things of beauty and high value which are always in peril because they are difficult and can be reached only by few.



## AFTER THE WAR





## VIII

### VICTORY AND AFTER

GIBBON in a famous passage expresses the judgement that 'If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus'. In particular he considers that the united reigns of the two Antonines 'are possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government.' With those words in my mind I happened to notice that Antoninus Pius on his death-bed left to his armies, or to his successor, the watchword *Aequanimitas*. The Latin word differs slightly from our 'equanimity' in having more in it of charity and kindness.

After five years of an exceptionally destructive war, surrounded by many disturbing problems, there is ample occasion for practising that virtue. Let us not be impatient. You cannot expect perfectly sober judgements from average men and women worn out by suffering and exasperated by conflict. There is no great harm in Nelson's explosive saying: 'I cannot breathe while a single Frenchman remains alive' or 'Down, down, down, with all the damned French villains' as long as it is recognized for what it is, an explosion of pent-up feeling, and not transformed into a serious policy. On the whole I believe our people are preserving their balance of mind. In listening to the impassioned celebrations of victory on 'VE-day' and 'VE-day plus 1' I was struck by two qualities in the general rejoicing. First I detected no note of exultant revenge; secondly I seemed to notice again and again a consciousness of the great problems of constructive peace still to be solved. In that triumphant moment hate was almost forgotten and duty remembered, a good augury for the

future. It is fatal of course, to think of Victory as a mere chance for revenge upon the conquered; almost equally fatal to think of it as an end in itself, as if the World War and the desolation it has caused were things to rejoice over. They are not that; they are evil things which our great victory gives us the chance to heal now and prevent hereafter. Wherever we see an evil we must think of a cure. Take the infamous concentration camps. We must remember other camps and prisons where governments or factions imprisoned their political opponents; in Spain, in France, in Greece, and most of all, according to report, in Russia. We must revive the movement for a Prisoners' Charter brought before the League of Nations by the Howard League in 1930 but crushed by the Great Powers in their mood of mutual appeasement. Revive that Charter of some minimum protection for all prisoners, especially political prisoners, and see that it is made a reality by effective international inspection. There will be objections to that. Of course there will. But there is an effective answer to such objections. Let it be known to the world which governments have refused to let their prisons be inspected. They will not long be able to endure that position of odium. The conscience of mankind will do its work.

I take that as one obvious example of the way in which, if we keep our balance of mind, we can try to set this afflicted continent free from the effects of war.

Let us remember, too, how the waves of national opinion and passion change according to the circumstances. Nelson was all for the destruction of the damned French villains. Now it is the damned German villains. But Captain Liddell Hart has unearthed from *The Times* of 10 December 1870, the year of the Franco-German War, the following:

We believe that Bismarck will take as much of Alsace-Lorraine, too, as he chooses, and that it will be the better for him, the better for us, the better for all the world save France, and the better in the long run for France herself. Through large and quiet measures Count Bismarck

is aiming, with evident ability, at a single object; the well-being of Germany and the world, of the large-hearted, peace-loving, enlightened and honest people of Germany growing into one nation; and if Germany becomes mistress of the Continent in place of France, which is light-hearted, ambitious, quarrelsome and over-excitible, it will be the most momentous event of the present day, and all the world must hope that it will soon come about.

There are even stronger statements from weighty authorities like the historians Freeman, Stubbs, and Kingsley.

As for the Japanese, if we listen to *The Times* of February 1904, we can hardly help being reminded of Pearl Harbour 1941. 'The Japanese Navy, thanks to the masculine decision of the Mikado and his advisers, has taken the initiative, and has opened the war by an act of daring. . . . By these acts of vigour, the Japanese Navy have profited by the initiative conferred on them by statesmanship, and have established a moral mastery of the situation.'

Such passages read rather oddly now. They are a warning to those of us who wish to preserve our equanimity and hold views that will bear the test of time.

We commonly use the adjective 'pre-War' without thinking of its profound significance. It is worth remembering that there was a time before this appalling curse was let loose upon us. A time when Mr. J. A. Spender, most respected of journalists, could say with general assent, 'A war between us and our German cousins is unthinkable', and to most Liberal-minded people a European war seemed like witchcraft or the burning of heretics, a thing utterly out of date. Most of my life was spent in that time, and I am tempted, perhaps foolishly, to look back to it as a sort of Golden Age. It was not that, though I think I would back it against the Age of the Antonines, but the difference between that time and the present is almost incredible. All through Europe there was peace, prosperity, rapid social progress, a high standard of culture, and above all an atmosphere of hope and a general acceptance of human progress as an obvious fact, and of what

is called 'Christian morality' as an agreed rule. The one really grave peril of the time, as it happened, was one of which few were conscious. It was visible to some, but by no means all, of those engaged in foreign affairs, but was quite ignored by the great mass of the nation. I mean what we now call the 'International Anarchy'. Every sovereign state was a law to itself. There was no legal or moral authority to control it.

I remember Sir Edward Grey saying to me that he thought he had done all that could be done to preserve peace under the existing conditions; what was clearly needed was some permanent international organization. And many will remember M. Briand's outburst: 'Tout le système est idiot!' The two most experienced Foreign Ministers in Europe were agreed on that.

Of course this independent sovereignty had always existed. The special danger of the time was that the world had become too closely unified, and international relations too intimate and disturbing; one may perhaps add, the power of great nations for mutual destruction too unlimited, for such anarchy to be any longer safe. The theoretical point was stated with great ability by Norman Angell and Lowes Dickinson; the practical danger was emphasized by Sir Edward Grey and Lord Rosebery, as well as by the pacifist Radicals who hated all armaments. I remember the mingled interest and surprise with which I heard Lord Rosebery utter his celebrated warning that, by the race in armaments, which was then just beginning, the world was 'rattling back to barbarism'. I had not realized it was as serious as all that. But it was.

It was the cloud as big as a man's hand which was to become a deadly tempest. But meantime travel was free; there were no passports, no obstacles at frontiers. The German universities were a Mecca to the learned. All Europe was open. Her magnificent cathedrals and art galleries and colleges gave welcome to visitors and students.

Social progress was taken for granted. All was hope. Where has that hope gone now? Where is the old freedom and friendliness? Where are the works of art, and even the houses? How many innocent people are homeless and foodless, or dying from wet and cold? Where is the high culture of Germany and Italy; how much is left even in France, Holland, Belgium, Norway; how much less in the eastern nations where the Nazis have deliberately set to work to make all Slavs into an illiterate slave population, and Russia has removed by death or deportation those strata of the population that she found too prosperous or too patriotic? The Balkans were no home of peace even in pre-war times; but how much worse they are now! Greece, far the best of them, may serve as an illustration.

Nothing human is incurable. If a few million men, women, and children die in extreme suffering, never mind: the race is highly prolific and their places will soon be taken. Except by a few women, their very names will be forgotten. Who knows even now the names of the brave resisters who died in Dachau, Buchenwald, or Belsen? If once the War stops; if there are no continuous civil wars; if none of the Great Powers becomes aggressive; if foreign policy remains chiefly in the hands of men who have been trained on peace and the League of Nations, not handed entirely over to new men whose political training has mostly been in sabotage and secret revenge, there may soon, so we are told, be enough food, nearly enough clothing, and possibly even enough transport if very carefully distributed, to avert famine and pestilence; in the course of years there may be enough houses, considering the very high death-rate; there will be, so we are told, such advance in scientific discovery as will soon restore, and far more than restore, the terrific material losses. But the intellectual and moral losses will remain. Throughout most of Europe we shall be dealing with a generation which has grown up with little or no education and a prey to violent passions, with wrongs to avenge which may well make any

moderation impossible, not to speak of pardon or generosity. We know to some extent the hatred of Germany caused in the occupied nations by Nazi atrocities, we must also realize the hatred amassed in Germany against us, and the lack of either faith or energy that is the result of sheer fatigue.

The question I want to ask is, what was the cause of this appalling change, casting down perhaps the highest civilization known to history into this chaos of strife? Transforming what was, I think, the most highly respected nation in Europe into a thing of evil, the enemy of the human race? It is not any ordinary political or economic error, not Capitalism or Socialism or Fascism or Democracy, faulty as they all are. It is war, simply war, that has done it. The decisive step was in the fatal Twelve Days of 1914, when, half-heartedly and blunderingly, the German Emperor consented to start the First World War. Poor man, he did not know what he was doing. Like all aggressors he greatly underrated his victims' will to resist. He, you may remember, expected *ein frischer fröhlicher Krieg*, which would be over by Christmas or at any rate by the early spring. That decision was like a few drops of rain on a watershed, deciding whether a vast flood should flow east or west. It decided that his own great nation, and, to a great extent, her enemies also, should, for an indefinite future, centre their national hopes and ambitions on their 'war potential', that is on their power of doing evil to mankind. It established Terrorism as the law between states. But was that enough? There have been wars and much longer wars before, from which nations recovered quickly and thankfully. Why is it that this time we are so slow to recover? There are certain obvious causes; the wide extent of the war, the immense power possessed by modern governments of using up the whole strength of their peoples, and of course the increased destructiveness of the weapons employed. But there is more to it than that. I think that one important cause of our present evils was the Bolshevik Revolution. It established Terrorism as the law

inside the State. That Revolution was of course due to the War. It had great excuses; it had ample historical justification. The wrongs and sufferings of the peasants and workmen who constituted the Russian armies were monstrous. They were betrayed by generals working for the enemy. They were sent into battle almost unarmed, sometimes with a few bombs and a club; sometimes with one rifle between several men. The revolutionary message came in simple terms, 'You want Peace; well, take it. Shoot your officers and walk home. You want land. Well, take it. You have enough arms to shoot the landlords as you go.' Such an appeal to men exhausted by suffering was irresistible. But the result, which might have been mere anarchy, was brilliantly and ruthlessly organized into a strictly totalitarian system. It was another dictatorship, a dictatorship of the outcast and submerged proletariat, or rather, since a proletariat cannot by its nature be a governing class, of its self-constituted leaders. The whole Communist party was put by Lenin himself at 10,000 in a nation of 160 million. And that 10,000 was in the hands of a dozen or two of real masters. It seems a miracle. And the explanation of the miracle is a terrible one. It is in part the dazzling effect on suffering people of apocalyptic promises of a New World, but far more it is the vast power of well-organized terrorism over the mind of man. No doubt Lenin had a large mass of unorganized and helpless discontent to support his movement and weaken any resistance; but the principles on which he organized his movement were not persuasive. 'It does not matter who is right; all that matters is who wins.' And the instrument by which the battle is won and victory maintained is 'Mass Terror'. Lenin, as his old friend Mr. Branting once said to me, was '*toujours un homme très théorique*'. And a theorist who does not shrink from the results of his theories is the most alarming of men.

However, I am concerned at present with the results outside Russia. Europe in general learnt from the Bolshevik

Revolution two lessons. First a negative lesson: there spread through nation after nation a horror of Bolshevik excesses, very like the horror caused 150 years ago by the excesses of the French Revolution. Those excesses, it has been pointed out, grew naturally out of the cruelties of the *Ancien Régime*; a brutal system had produced a brutal generation. To an even more terrible extent the singular inhumanity of the Russian *Ancien Régime* had left, under the bright surface of extreme modern enlightenment, the old deep-rooted Russian disregard for human life and suffering. Foreign opinion even in the Socialist parties swung strongly against Bolshevism.

Secondly a positive and much deadlier lesson: the lesson that these sinister methods were after all successful—amazingly successful. It is striking to read in the Nazi handbooks, together with violent denunciations of Bolshevism, a repetition, sometimes verbally exact, almost always identical in substance, of the main Bolshevik maxims, together with the same contempt for ‘bourgeois morality’, the same concept of ‘class enemies’ taking the place of criminals, backed by the same secret police, torture, and mass terror.

The proletarian revolution has not so far been successful anywhere except in Russia, where circumstances combined to favour it. By an irony of circumstance it is the anti-Bolshevik parties who have made most use of Bolshevik methods. In Germany, Japan, Italy, Spain, and later in Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary, we have seen the rule of violence established, and, so far as our information goes, it seems that if this rule of violence is overthrown, the most probable alternative is a similar rule of violence on the opposite side, not any restoration of law or moral right. Speaking from my own experience of many years at Geneva, I should say that almost every representative of a European nation whom I met was in dread either of the Nazi terror or of the Bolshevik terror; and not without cause.

When once the issue is simply We or They, with all



'bourgeois morality' cast aside, the horrors They commit put us in a state of fury, and the horrors We commit do the same to them. And of course in the midst of a reign of violence constitutional opposition is ineffective. Against a gunman with a revolver good principles are no protection; the only safe course is to shoot him first. The same consideration explains the apparently senseless severity of certain governments. If Stalin deports multitudes of perfectly innocent and patriotic Poles to die in the Arctic or in Siberia, it is because, however innocent they may be, they are anti-Russian, and no doubt, if they had the chance, would do what they could to drive the Russians out of Poland. A very distinguished member of the Russian government once said to me with a smile: 'You don't understand the psychology of a nation that has had a civil war. To us the normal reason for killing a man is that he differs from us in politics.' Ultimately such people kill and torture and betray each other because they live in a state of war. They are afraid, and justly afraid. To give them a chance of becoming humane or reasonable the first necessity is to remove that fear.

People are fond of saying that this war is an ideological war. That is true, though the ideological differences are not clear-cut. In real life they never are. The fundamental difference is, I believe, that which I have tried to describe: that the peoples of the British Commonwealth, of western Europe and of the United States, are, or at any rate were, in the normal state of mind of peaceful communities, and not converted to the war mentality. The difference is clear. In a society accustomed to peace people believed in 'bourgeois morality'. They settle their differences by peaceful means, by arguing, persuading, ultimately by voting, with an unspoken fundamental agreement to tolerate a good deal of variety, and to abstain from cheating or violence. This implies a general belief in Law and Freedom. In a society thoroughly accustomed to war, Terrorism rules. You deceive, intimidate, or kill those who differ from you. You may be a

minority; but if you have the will, the courage, the resolution, the ruthlessness, you can make the cowardly multitude obey. It is You or They, and the party that never shrinks will win.

No ideological division is ever perfectly borne out in fact, but the above is much more the real division than any other which has been suggested. It is important, however, to remember that no nation went to war for the sake of its ideology, or in order to achieve some social or political reform. Fools as we doubtless are, we are not such fools as all that.

No nation went to war with Germany because Germany was Fascist or reactionary. No nation went to war for the Atlantic Charter. The nations of Europe went to war because they were attacked. They all waited patiently, either neutral like Holland and Norway, or in treaty with Germany, like Russia, until Germany made war on them. The Americans were equally patient and lacking in foresight till they were compelled against their will to defend themselves after Pearl Harbour. The action of Great Britain, indeed, was rather different. After years of reluctance, in which we assisted in the demolition of the League of Nations and sacrificed almost all our sources of strength, we did at the last moment make a treaty to defend a country which we could not possibly defend and thereby committed ourselves to war under the worst possible conditions. It was not a brilliant policy, but at least it did show the whole world how absolutely unaggressive we were. It did show some fragment of sorely belated foresight, whereas the rest of Europe showed no foresight whatever. But in our case too the cause of war was war: we saw in Hitler's Germany a dangerous enemy preparing to spring on Europe and ourselves. The war is an ordinary war of self-defence in the sense that we have been fighting to save ourselves from conquest by Germany; but it is an ideological war in the sense that we, and other normal law-abiding nations like us, have

discovered that we cannot live with nations which think as the Germans do.

I suppose I suffer from the prejudices and blind spots of the average moderately well-informed British Liberal. I am devoted to 'bourgeois morality'; I believe greatly in the value of a strong well-educated Middle Class, such as exists in England, France, and Holland, but is lacking in Spain and Nazi Germany; but I find myself ready to tolerate, nay, to study and learn from, many forms of political theory that in easier times were highly antipathetic to me. I am sure, for instance, that we have something to learn, both in ideals and in practice, from Fascism; I am convinced that, dangerous as nationalist Protection has always shown itself to be, Free Trade must largely be modified by international planning. I believe in the Freedom of the Press, but I am tempted to agree with Ibsen and with certain Fascists that there are other qualities it needs quite as much as freedom. I like parliamentary democracy; but I have seen serious weaknesses in democracy during our recent troubles and I have to admit that to work a parliamentary system effectively needs a higher standard of patience and of personal honesty than is always available. In actual party politics I am ready, like other people, to swallow large doses of Socialism, and I see the enormous value of an intelligent Conservatism in saving a very fine, though imperfect, civilization now in danger. I am not free from Protestant prejudices, but I most warmly welcome the statements of principle that have come at certain crises from the pope and from Catholic bishops in Germany. Where do the limits of toleration come? Roughly speaking, they coincide with the limits of good will. I cannot co-operate with the man who is seeking to cut my throat. I cannot co-operate with the nation whose object is war, because war, as a policy, chooses my evil and the evil of the world as its good. I must confess it seems to me quite obvious that the characteristic policies of Nazi Germany, the preference of guns over butter, the training of boys to

look forward to a soldier's death, and of girls to give birth to more soldiers, the aggressive intrigues abroad, the terrorism at home, the training of the young in deliberate brutality, the reliance on the Gestapo, the conquest of nation after nation, and the extermination with monstrous cruelty of whole multitudes of Jews and Slavs—all this devilish complex is neither Socialist nor Capitalist, neither Left nor Right, democratic nor aristocratic, Conservative nor Radical. It is a quality well known to human history long before the days of Napoleon or even Attila. To see it you need only go to the Assyrian Room of the British Museum and observe the Great King smiling over heaps of skulls or superintending the tortures of his contemptible enemies; a quality by which many of the greatest authors of human misery have earned statues in all the capitals of Europe, and added to their names such titles as The Great, or The Conqueror.

To sum up, while of course there are scores of grave evils in present-day European civilization, it seems to me that the outstanding evil, far beyond all others both in its own evil nature and its influence in causing and increasing other evils is simply war, and the first necessity is that war should stop. It will not stop voluntarily. There are nations, parties, gangs, mobs, ambitious individuals, who will from time to time gamble on the hope of a sudden *Putsch* or a *frischer fröhlicher Krieg*. Therefore it must be stopped compulsorily. How much freedom, how much justice, how much democracy there may be in the peace so imposed is a secondary question; the first necessity is that the vast majority of mankind who are against war should impose their will on the few who have set their hearts and hopes on war, or on some goal which they can only attain by war. But, that first necessity once achieved, I am convinced that we shall find a great many of the other evils will also disappear. Most of them are directly caused by the fear of war. In every corner of economic and social and even intellectual life the same poison persists. If once the danger of war in Europe could be

made as remote as it is between England and Scotland, or even between the United States and Canada, I am convinced that the advance in humanity, culture, good faith, and all political morality would be something we can scarcely calculate or imagine.

Consequently to my mind the first question is between war and security, or, in other words, between the rule of Law and the anarchy of force. The first need of the world is to defeat and render powerless the believers in war and then to establish peace and the rule of Law. This applies both to the great nations, like Japan and Germany, whose policy is to establish an empire by aggressive war, and to the parties which, in almost all the liberated countries, may act like E.L.A.S. in Greece, and attempt to seize power by crime and violence. The most imminent of all post-war dangers is a series of civil wars all over Europe, completing the cruelty and desolation caused by the great war, and making recovery impossible. To prevent civil wars should be the agreed policy, I would almost say, the absolute duty, of the Great Powers. It will be difficult. It may require the use of force. It may involve interference in the domestic affairs of foreign states. It will be misrepresented in the Press. But, as I see it, the fundamental purpose of our effort both in 1914 and 1939 was to rid the world of war and the fear of war; and it would be mere madness, after humanity's vast sacrifices, to allow the very plague which we have tried to extirpate to settle down into a permanent endemic disease.

This view is of course exposed to criticism. Law, it will be argued, if it is not to be mere tyranny, if it is in any real sense to preserve peace or freedom, must be based upon justice or rather, should we say, what the people concerned regard as a tolerable approximation to justice? It is only safe if it commands the consent of the governed. How can we hope to attain this, and without it how can the United Nations claim to have established peace? This objection is difficult to meet. I have brooded over it again and again, and

believe that I see at least dimly in principle the outlines of an answer.

Clearly, perfectionism will never do. It is mere folly, it is sometimes folly tinged with hypocrisy, to reject all practical agreements because they are not in our opinion perfect. It would be a disaster to the whole world for instance if the U.S.A. were to reject the new World Organization for Peace because of some admitted defect. Let us consider what it is that we are accepting.

At the end of this war it is hardly too much to say that the world lies, almost prostrate, at the mercy of three great empires. There is no power above them. They are free, if they like, to keep their hands unbound in a position of unchecked anarchical domination, whether as a group or in isolation; they are free equally to accept the grand duty of World Citizenship and co-operate for a common purpose with other civilized nations.

Which do they mean to do? To judge by their projected treaties and their statements of policy, they really mean to co-operate on what they call 'terms of sovereign equality', aiming at peace and justice rather than conquest. They have agreed to re-establish an international organ of political, social, and economic co-operation almost exactly on the lines of the League. This act in itself is fundamental. Whatever flaws the new organization may have in detail, it at least ensures a habit of regular meeting and conference and co-operation between all the important nations. It gives us the instrument for which Sir Edward Grey begged in vain in 1914; the one thing which would in his opinion have averted the First World War.

It has advantages over the old League, not only in the membership of the American and Russian republics, but also in the vast field of co-operation, economic, social, humanitarian and even educational, which it promises—that peaceful field where the need of the world in its daily life is greatest and where the old League, in spite of its

limitations, had ever-increasing and almost uninterrupted success.

By this means it may well remedy one of the greatest lacks in the old League: it will make membership of the organization an obvious material advantage which no nation will like to forfeit. We shall have no resignations on frivolous grounds, no light-hearted intrigues or acts of aggression which might lead to expulsion. The League will in economic matters have a whip hand over its members. I will not dwell on the two most marked differences of the new Charter from the old Covenant: the abolition of the old rule requiring unanimity for all new decisions except the settling of disputes, and the grant of compulsory power to a certain qualified majority of the Council; nor yet on the concentration of effort not on good faith or justice but directly on the absolute prohibition of war. Much might be said about both points; but I find another issue even more significant.

It was, if you think of it, an extraordinary thing for a country like Russia, with its totalitarian principles, its autarkic economy, its immense system of secrecy, and its hereditary mistrust of the West, to agree to make the sacrifice involved in joining an international body in which it would have constantly to confer and co-operate and sometimes to submit its will to the general will. One cannot but ask if the Russians fully realized what it meant. And the answer probably is that they did not. Political motives are always mixed; national policies are always muddled. I am not sure that Great Britain or France, not to speak of Italy or Japan, realized the full implications of the old League. At any rate, it presently appeared that the Russians, without being conscious of any inconsistency, expected that Russia should have a right of veto over any action which the League might propose to take and any subject which the League might wish to discuss. She did not mind the other Great Powers having the same privilege, but the will of no Great Power must ever be thwarted. It is obvious that such a system would not be

just, nor yet consistent with the League of Nations idea. One cannot but recall Mr. Churchill's warning against making an organization which should be 'merely a shield of the strong and a mockery of the weak'. On the other hand, the veto on action, if it stood alone, could be very plausibly defended. Action by the rest of the Council directly against the interest and will of a Great Power would very likely mean war, and the break-down of the whole security system. Most reasonable people will agree that it is far better to acquiesce in some local injustice or oppression than to plunge humanity into another great war. After the Conference of the Big Three at Yalta it looked as if an acceptable compromise had been reached. It was agreed that there should be no veto on discussion, and that in the judgement upon the rights and wrongs of any dispute the actual disputants should not vote. It has since proved, however, that this interpretation of the Yalta Agreement was not quite correct; the Russians permit free discussions but maintain an absolute veto both on action and on what they call 'investigation'. If some disquieting or shocking situation is reported from some part of the world, the Russians claim that every Great Power shall have the right to say 'No: this shall not be investigated, because investigation might lead to action.'

This, I fear, is very serious indeed; and unfortunately it is essential to the idea of a totalitarian state. A totalitarian state is one which does not tolerate any opposition, or criticism, either at home or abroad. It excludes broadcasts from foreign countries and punishes those who contrive to listen to them. It does not admit foreign correspondents or military experts to the front. It gives no freedom to what are called the 'liberated' countries to choose their own government; it imposes a government guaranteed to be obedient to the liberator.

This policy may seem to us terribly aggressive, but it is not necessarily that. To the Soviet Government it may seem merely defensive and natural. The theory of a totalitarian



government, whether Fascist or Communist, is that the existing system is absolutely right; any opposition to the government is treason, therefore obviously there must be only one political party. Furthermore, they will argue, 'Since our system is right and the systems of all foreign states wrong and dangerous, the less our people hear of them the better. We are engaged on a great enterprise which needs the undivided loyalty of the whole nation; if we let in foreign broadcasts or foreign journalists and observers, our people's ideas may be confused or their faith shaken. If we permit states with alien systems to exist on our borders, still worse, if we permit governments not sympathetic to Russia, our grand experiment may be spoilt.'

Now I only want to make one criticism on this attitude. I do not wish to consider whether the systems established so successfully in Russia, so unsuccessfully in Germany and Italy, were good or bad; a case can be made out for giving the Russian system every chance of success and admitting no distracting influences to interfere with it. My one point is that this attitude is quite inconsistent with the ideal of the United Nations. The very essence of that ideal is constant co-operation, mutual consultation, understanding, and a readiness of each member of the organization to make, on occasion, sacrifices to the welfare of the whole. There is a difference in the fundamental philosophies of the two forms of government. The totalitarian treats human relations and political theories as if they were mathematical formulae, absolutely right or else absolutely wrong. If you happen to possess the system that is absolutely right, why should you listen to the poisonous nonsense of those who are wrong?

The Liberal faith, from which the Charter of the United Nations springs, sees clearly that human relations are not, like mathematical formulae, absolutely right or else absolutely wrong; they vary in infinite gradations, they always want looking after, they can always be improved; and different human societies can often learn from one another. The most

vital distinction of all is one that we have seen tragically illustrated in these last years. The Liberal nations freely admit that all political theories and partisan views are fallible and in need of correction as experience increases, while the basic rules of what we call Christian morality, though it is really far older than Christianity, are—how shall I put it?—almost certain, almost eternal. We are sure that if your politics lead to crime, your politics must be reconsidered. The totalitarian treats his political system as certain; and if the accepted rules of morality have to be broken by it, so much the worse for morality.

The future outlook is difficult but not black. As Mr. Eden has said, there are gravely disquieting symptoms here and there, but they do not suggest a danger of war. They do suggest a great difficulty in co-operation. Nevertheless it is clear that the United Nations must co-operate. The traditional role of Britain in particular is to interpret nations to one another. The American tradition of economic protection and political isolation, the Russian tradition of secrecy and suspicion towards their Western neighbours, must sooner or later be worn down and changed by the growth of mutual intimacy in a new League of Nations.

I base my hope of the future on two forces, both having power to penetrate unconsciously minds that seem bitterly closed against them; that is, on the spread of truth and on the wakening of the conscience of mankind. Both lie within the power of our new organization. The main cause of all the crimes and miseries of the last ten years has been the dominance of the organized lie. That, by co-ordinated action, statesmen can probably stop. We can establish, for instance, some system of world broadcasting of objective and well-attested facts which will prevent whole nations being not merely imprisoned in ignorance but fed on deliberate and organized myths. Secondly, we can by means of the Assembly of the Organization, when facing problems of peace and war and all the greatest moral issues, give a voice

to the conscience of the world. If strict technical investigation is barred, discussion at the Assembly remains free. To the seeker for justice I would say *In hoc signo vinces*: the spread of truth, the public opinion of the world.

The members of the Assembly are necessarily governments; and no doubt governments, being trustees for their nations, are apt to be more nationalist and harder to move than the average intelligent individual. But in looking through some League of Nations records lately I saw by chance some unimportant words of my own, spoken in 1923, when pleading with the great governments to deal at last with the Reparations Question, either by settling it themselves or by handing it to the League to settle. I explained that I was speaking for no government, but yet for a very large constituency in many countries; for all the League of Nations Societies in Europe, for certain economic bodies, and by special request for the international federation of Trade Unions. Similar, though vastly more important, was the world-wide petition in favour of Disarmament in 1931, led by the representatives of the soldiers who had fought on both sides in the world war, of the widows and next of kin, of Trade Unions, of Churches, of economic and philanthropic societies, forming in the words of the President, Arthur Henderson, 'the chosen spokesmen of 1,700 millions of people'. There was a voice there behind the official voices of governments, a voice which at that time expressed the suffering and longing of humanity, and which hereafter, if discussion at the Council and Assembly is really free, may in times of need give the new League a call to reality and justice. The free discussion in the Assembly will be heard throughout the world and echoed in the Press of all nations. There will be no compulsion; for the weak can never compel the strong; but when the right and wrong of an issue are fairly clear, when the formal judgement of the Assembly is explicit and the conscience of the world awakened, it will be difficult for even the most self-willed of Great Powers entirely

to neglect such a call. I see here the field of work for those individuals and voluntary societies in this country and elsewhere who have so often longed to contribute to the great world crusade against war and international violence, but have found themselves without weapons, impotent and dumb.

## IX THE NEW LEAGUE

### I. THE CHARTER

THE general state of the world at the end of the Second World War is tragically different from that at the end of the first. Naturally; since, of course, two wars do more harm than one. The devastation, both material and moral, in Europe is far worse; that in the Far East, so far as information leaks through, will hardly bear thinking of. War crimes have been terrible, and those committed by the beaten party are to be punished; those on the other side are apparently not to be mentioned. And though the inter-ally organizations for relief and rehabilitation and the continuance of social and economic co-operation are present in all minds, and if well administered may save civilization, the general set of the pieces on the board seems to envisage preparation for war rather than for peace. In 1918 the British Government pledged itself immediately to abolish conscription; the whole League bound itself to general disarmament. To-day all three parties in Britain are pledged to continue conscription; while the new League is committed to the maintenance of armaments on a gigantic scale and always ready.

•Let us face the fact that this new organization is in spirit rather different from the 'Wilsonian' League. To Mr. Wilson the signing of the Covenant was to have been a public act of repentance by all nations. His various pronouncements, from the Fourteen Points to the Four Principles, are all chiefly concerned with political morality. The latter document, for instance, insisted that 'Each part of the final settlement must be based on the essential justice of that particular case'; it must contribute to 'the reign of law based upon the consent of the governed and supported by the organised opinion of mankind'. There was to be 'no

consideration whatever of diplomatic bargains and power politics'. It is significant that the President himself was against permitting any resignations from the League; resignation would imply a relapse into criminal habits, a proceeding which clearly must not be authorized. And though this idealist conception was in various ways modified and made more 'practical' in the Covenant as finally drafted, it remains significant that the Covenant did not directly forbid war but trusted to getting rid of war by means of 'just and open dealings' and fair settlements, with a threat of coercion somewhat dimly indicated in the background.

The League failed; and if one tries to find the main reason for its failure, one sees that it was not strong enough. Neither the U.S.A. nor Russia were members. Both indeed were rather unfriendly.

The reasons for the absence of the U.S.A. were chiefly domestic. There is probably quite as large a proportion of . . . what shall we call them? Idealists or believers in international morality . . . in the U.S.A. as in any country, but in every country such people are a minority. The Republican opponents of Wilson, many of whom had been strong supporters of the League idea, were able to stir up a vast mass of ignorant anti-foreign prejudice which, whatever harm it might do in world affairs, at least had the supreme merit of securing office for the Republicans at home. There was persistent misrepresentation of the League; much nonsense about the 'six British votes'; a refusal ever to submit to the ruling of a Court of Justice that was not 100 per cent. American; a horror of the International 'Labour Office' because it was 'International Labour', and the like.

Russia was different. The chief Powers of the League had been hostile to revolutionary Russia, and Russia had no habit of co-operation with anyone. When the Russian Government did consider joining the League in 1933 one of its representatives who consulted the present writer on the point explained that their chief object was security in case of

an attack by Japan. The conduct of the League at the time did not offer much prospect of a League war to defend Russia, but at least membership would make it certain that Russia would not be attacked in the rear by some European Power, and almost certain that she would obtain the necessary war supplies. Russia joined the League, and sent some very interesting delegates; but she always remained rather a stranger at Geneva, and lost her membership by her unprovoked attack on Finland in 1938.

The new Organization, therefore, sought, as its very basis, and almost at any cost, the adherence of the United States and Russia. The price was considerable. The two recalcitrants demanded first the full privileges of isolation for themselves and secondly a power of coercion over ordinary members of the League. The unanimity rule, a provision much criticized and not always understood, was to be dropped; a two-thirds majority was to have coercive power; but each of the five 'Great Powers' was not only to be free but was to have a right of veto upon all proceedings. This demand gave a considerable shock both to believers in Wilsonian principles, who resented its injustice, and to the whole mass of small and middling nations, who saw their freedom and dignity sacrificed. At the Yalta Conference the British believed they had obtained an important concession; that the veto should apply only to *action*; the judicial work of the Council in considering the rights and wrongs of a dispute should be free; the parties to a dispute were not to vote; the Council would judge impartially and make its recommendation; only then could the veto operate before the recommendation could be carried out in action. There was much to be said for such a compromise on grounds of expediency. Action by the League in direct opposition to the wishes of a Great Power would be an end of the League as such. All that would be left would be a certain number of Powers who might or might not be willing to face the risks of war together. Britain was ready to accept this compromise; America

positively welcomed it. It was indeed only a recognition of facts.

Unfortunately it proved at San Francisco to be not at all what the Russians had meant. They demanded a veto not only on action, but on any 'recommendation' of the Council, on the 'discussion' of any subject they did not wish discussed, or the 'investigation' of any state of affairs they did not wish investigated. This demand put the League so completely at the mercy of the Great Powers that it imperilled the whole object of the conference. The rest of the world might well ask what good could be expected from an elaborate and high-sounding convention which was to be rigidly binding upon all nations except those likely to break it. At the last moment Russia made a slight concession. She maintained her veto on action, on investigation, on recommendation; but she permitted 'discussion'. The rest of the nations were constrained to accept these terms, and the American Senate is said to be pleased with them. An isolationist government will not only be able to remain isolated, but will have a power, or even what is called a 'right', to forbid the co-operation of others. For example, take the case of the old Refugee Organization. In the negotiations of 1924-5 the League, considering the distress of the refugees from many parts of Europe, proposed to set up an organization for their guidance and protection. Russia refused and broke the unanimity. Thereupon the other members of the League proceeded to set up a new collective organization, not strictly part of the League, with its seat at Lausanne, not at Geneva, to do the work. In the United Nations Organization, apparently, Russia could veto any such action. The ordinary members of the League would have sacrificed part of their sovereignty, not to the general welfare or any principle of justice, but merely to the interest or whim of a Great Power. To take another case, suppose the Council in considering the Syrian dispute recommended an investigation into the facts, France or Britain could forbid the investigation.



This would be serious; I expect, however, that the first difficulty will arise not from the assertion of the veto but from the abolition of the unanimity rule. The great beauty of that rule was that it left every nation free. They might be persuaded but they could not be coerced. And since it is virtually impossible to coerce any free nation into doing what it is determined not to do, it is probably wise in the treaty to recognize that fact. I strongly suspect that the first real strain on the constitution of the new League will come when it attempts to give orders to some nation accustomed to freedom. It is a new provision that the Security Council should have the power to issue orders, while the fact that the 'Great Powers' need not obey such orders will greatly weaken such moral authority as they might have had.

The security clauses, providing the new Organization with 'teeth' of enormous size and instantaneous action, have been generally applauded as putting the new Charter on quite a different level of practical efficiency from the old Covenant. And so it might well seem on first reading. But reflection raises doubts and even suspicions. The only Powers possessing or likely to possess enough forces to put the peace of the world in peril have armed themselves to the full and insisted that the great Peace Organization shall have no authority over them. They make certain general promises of good behaviour, but remain free to do as they like. Meantime we are expected to congratulate ourselves that the new League has 'teeth'. It certainly has, but one cannot help asking what the teeth are for. Are they to crush a resurgent Germany and Japan, our beaten enemies, long since made impotent, and condemned by all sorts of severe regulations to be kept impotent for all foreseeable future? Are they to cow Denmark and Portugal, or to compel Canada or Brazil to obey the decisions of a two-thirds majority? All such suggestions rather remind one of the precautions proposed by a recent Mayor of Chicago to defend the U.S.A. against 'the aggressions of King George'. If the collective organization of force

were accompanied by a drastic reduction of national armaments all round, that would be an intelligible policy. It would show a general expectation of peace fortified by a general confidence in the international organization. But the opposite policy is being followed. First of all it seems, so far as there is information, that the Russian army is to be kept up at its present enormous strength. If that is so, all parties in Great Britain and apparently in America also are advocating permanent conscription in peace-time, a policy unheard of before in either country. The other Great Powers can hardly avoid following this alarming example; already one hears talk of a permanent force of 10 millions in China. Now I am not saying that this extreme militarization of the world is not necessary: it may be; but it is clear that such laborious and almost ruinous precautions can only be justified by a state of grave anxiety and danger. One is tempted to agree with what General Smuts said to the Press at Ottawa: 'The San Francisco Conference is a framework of peace in the midst of a boiling cauldron. . . . Forces that have been kept under by civilisation are now unchained. The world will be alive ~~with~~ danger. . . . Do not ask me who is the enemy. I do not know. It may be ourselves.'

That word 'ourselves' is curious. Does it mean that the Great Powers, in their own great organization of peace, are all arming against each other? This is extremely different from the atmosphere of 1919.

We all know the terrible significance of vast competitive armaments. If long continued they must lead either to economic ruin or to war. The best sign, indeed the only sure sign, of any general confidence in the new Organization for preserving peace will be a universal and rapid reduction of armaments.

The nations which really believed in the Wilsonian League have had to pay a heavy price for the adhesion of the two previously recalcitrant Powers. It is worth considering what

we have got for that price. In the first place it is well to recall the great value of the Concert of Europe in the nineteenth century. It did not always attain, or even aim at, justice; but it managed to prevent war between the Great Powers. That is a very great thing; and, as to the settlements reached, it is probable that any agreed settlement will be better than a settlement by war.

In the second place San Francisco has had its effect in compelling the Great Powers to pay some attention to the public opinion of the rest of the world. It has removed from the draft Charter the unfortunate phrases which limited the protection of the League to 'peace-loving' nations and disputes 'which may lead to a breach of the peace'. No doubt it was remembered that Mussolini in 1923 claimed that his invasion of Corfu could not lead to a breach of the peace because Greece was too weak to resist, while Stalin, when Finland did resist his invasion, could point out that she was not 'peace-loving'. The small state was gripped in pincers either way. Even more important, San Francisco has inserted, especially in the new preamble, the maintenance of 'justice and international law' and of 'human rights and fundamental freedoms' as purposes of equal validity with the mere 'preservation of peace'. It has strengthened the Mandates Commission into a larger and more powerful commission of Trusteeship; it has given the Security Council the duty of seeing that the decisions of the International Court are really obeyed. It has obtained, after a long struggle, one concession from Russia, that the veto shall not apply to mere 'discussion'—and it devoutly hopes, though it cannot be sure, that this means discussion in full publicity.

These details add up to a considerable sum. But there is also a third consideration of great importance. Only people of some experience can appreciate the very strong influence exercised by the mere habit of conference. An unscrupulous or aggressive Power, when it comes into conference with others and finds the bad impression it makes, the amount of

opposition its projects may meet with, and even the psychological alienation of small nations whom it would like to have as its clients and followers, becomes inevitably more 'international-minded'.

If the new Organization leads to a habit of frequent conference it is almost certain that many extremes of nationalist selfishness will be softened. Many protectionist and exclusionist policies may be modified when governments are enabled in conference to see the results they produce. At the present time, for example, the excessive reticence and caution of Russian policy seems to be chiefly due to suspicion of her allies; many Russians seem actually to think that British and American governments are laying traps for Russian negotiators or even plotting an eventual war against Russia. The only way to meet and destroy such suspicions is by free co-operation and conference. If the Russian government as a whole got to know the English as intimately as, for instance, MM. Maisky and Litvinov knew them, the suspicions would disappear, and with them the mysterious policies which tend to rouse similar suspicions on the other side. Co-operation between England and Russia will in many ways be difficult, not so much owing to Russia's new-found Communism as through the old Asiatic diplomacy and barbaric methods against which the Communist Revolution itself was in part a protest. It will not be made easier by the enthusiastic nationalism and militarism which have followed the spectacular victories of the Red Army. The only way in which it can be made easier is by practising it. By co-operating we shall learn to co-operate; by associating with that strange but extraordinarily gifted people we shall learn to understand them and may ourselves come to be understood. If further help is wanted, as it certainly is, I would suggest that the best way to appreciate any foreign nation is through its classical literature: Germany through Goethe and Kant; France through Racine and Pascal and Voltaire; Russia through Tolstoy, Turgenev, and some of the religious

writers. The present is always the time of friction; no one wants to quarrel with Goethe and Tolstoy.

There are plenty of frictions and prejudices to be allayed apart from Russia, plenty of sensitive spots which will resent touching. Great Britain has always considered that there are 'certain regions' in which she will object to interference; the United States has a 'hemisphere' and more; France has a very widespread sensitiveness. Successful nations like the Arabs and Jugoslavs, and victim nations like the Poles and Jews, will all present gigantic difficulties. The greatest difficulty of all, at any rate in Europe, may be the domestic discord which has in the past made so many nations easy victims to Hitler and threatens even now to take the form of civil war. This must at all costs be stopped. War implies psychologically an abandonment of persuasion and fair dealing and a resolve to win your ends by fraud or violence; politically it means a concentration of every nation's mind on its 'war potential', that is, on its power of doing harm to mankind. Until the fear of war is off the board it is no use thinking about justice.

The new Charter has certainly one great advantage over the Covenant: the field of practical co-operation which it provides is wider and more continuous. It is interesting to note that the Swedish Institute objects to this. It feels so strongly the injustice of the Security arrangements that it does not wish the social and economic work of the Organization to be in any way dependent on the Security Council. Yet surely that dependence is inevitable. The body whose duty is to prevent war must in international affairs be supreme. You cannot imagine an independent Health Section or Economic Section carrying on projects which the Security Council disapproved. On the contrary the best hope for reducing the military preoccupations of the Council and thereby reducing also the importance of the veto, is to increase the volume of constructive co-operation for which the whole Organization will be responsible. If one

tries to think out the work incumbent on the Social and Economic Council in receiving the reports and reviewing the policies and budgets of all the 'specialized agencies', as well as 'making or initiating' its own studies and reports on almost all the problems of human life, while keeping an eye at the same time on the preservation of 'human rights and fundamental freedoms' throughout the world, it seems clear that we are here setting up an organ of co-operative world government of a magnitude never approached hitherto. No doubt it will make modest beginnings; so prudence will counsel; but if those beginnings are successful the work will grow. It may well, in a generation or two, produce such a mass of day-by-day international co-operation for common ends as will make isolationism ridiculous and show up war as what it essentially is, a mere anachronistic wrecking of business.

The great armaments are probably a necessity, at least until drastic reduction can be unanimous. The veto of the Great Powers was a necessity if all the Great Powers were to join the Organization. On the other side we obtain definite pledges from all Members of the Organization to abstain from war or threats of war, and definite pledges to prevent war by common action except in one class of case where common action is impossible. Most important of all we obtain effective international machinery for transacting all that vast volume of affairs, judicial, economic, social, humanitarian, and intellectual, which from historical causes have become increasingly international in their nature and were a constant source of danger when dealt with merely as matters of national interest. After all, as President Truman has said: 'The Charter may be imperfect, but there is no other way.' One need only add the pregnant words of Mr. Jan Masaryk: 'Please, gentlemen, please; do not speak of "the next war"!'

## II. THE SURROUNDINGS

The position of the civilized world after the San Francisco Conference is in my judgement more precarious than at any time in the last hundred years. This is not, of course, the fault of the conference; the conference represented a magnificent effort by the nations concerned both at mutual justice and at self-preservation; but after all possible has been done to give us hope and safety, the fundamental unsafety of almost all that mankind values stands out more starkly than before. Thirty years of war, 'total war' in its worst extreme, cannot be wiped out leaving a clean sheet behind them. Almost all the nations of the world, most of them longing for peace after long suffering, met at San Francisco to devise a scheme of peace; discussed and improved the schemes set before them; unanimously and with all signs of enthusiasm adopted the plan they thought best, and forthwith went off home to prepare against the danger of war.

Notably the British Empire and the United States adopted a law for military conscription in peace-time. I am not prepared to say that this was wrong. The leaders of opinion in all the countries say it is necessary. Smuts, Truman, Byrnes, Churchill, Eden, Attlee, Bevin, Mackenzie King, Curtin, Fraser seem all to agree; it would be foolish for private individuals who have not their sources of information, and can hardly claim to be more devoted to peace than they are, to declare that they are all mistaken. After all, if the U.S.S.R. insists on maintaining an army of 6 millions or more and pursuing a policy which is hard to understand, other nations can hardly be expected to disarm. So be it! But at any rate let us consider what such a decision means.

It is a decision utterly contrary to the customs and the ways of thought of the English-speaking peoples; it is a practice taken from the nations that provoked the War and—incidentally—were beaten in the War. We are to take every male citizen, at the age most valuable both for body

and mind, and make him devote his energy and imagination to the craft of war—that is, a craft of doing the maximum of evil to mankind. Incidentally, at a time when the economic future and perhaps the very existence of this country as a great nation depends on our powers of production and our supply of efficient labour, we take permanently a million, or according to present plans two million, first-class labourers away from productive work. At a time when all the Christian bodies in Europe are insisting on the need of a moral regeneration we take all our young men at a most sensitive age away from their home influences and their normal interests; knowing that this will often lead to vice, and vice to increase of venereal disease, which is bad for the army, we decide to make vice ‘safe’ and easy for everyone by providing every young man at the State’s expense with ‘protective’ implements. In the old despised days of the Victorian bourgeois decent men in respectable families were expected to abstain from whoremongering, but now the State, permanently, in peace-time, tells them openly that it expects the reverse. And meantime, of course, as all experts in the subject could have told us beforehand, the disease we expected to check by these measures is increasing fast. I will say nothing of the moral effects of camp life in general; it is a complex subject, and discipline, even of the most crude compulsory sort, has its good effects on most characters. I will not speak of such minor inconveniences as the cutting short for many men of their normal liberal education and the substitution of a highly specialized course in maiming, blinding, and killing, such as was given to commandos in war-time, and may prove practically useful to individuals of criminal tendencies in times of peace. Nor will I dwell on the ill effects of the social *pammixia* involved in conscription, the indiscriminate mixing of good with bad elements of society, of which we see the effects in the spread of bad language and the bad thinking that accompanies it, especially in matters of sex and politics.



The War that has just been won is still alive. The form it takes is that of justifiable revenge. The Nuremberg trials were perhaps indispensable; the crimes of the Nazis were too horrible to be ignored. The trials may even have had an important effect in international law by defining 'war crimes' and establishing the criminality of waging or planning aggressive war. But they cannot be expected to make any moral impression on the Germans as long as it is only the vanquished who are tried, and tried by their enemies. A soldier hanged in peace-time by the enemy to whom he has surrendered always becomes a hero to his own people; even the most guilty civilians in such a case have their crimes forgotten. The perpetual hangings in cold blood, even of undoubted criminals, leaves ordinary German feelings doubly embittered against what seems to them the bloodthirsty hypocrisy of their 'Liberators'. At the same time the just anger of the Allies has been inflamed by the almost inconceivable horrors of cruelty, inflicted by the war movement in Germany on the peoples of the occupied countries, chiefly in the East but also in the West, primarily on the intellectuals and bourgeois Liberals and Social Democrats who resisted it, but also on whole populations indiscriminately. It is only natural that, apart from mere measures of security and the punishment of actual criminals, there should be left an almost insatiable passion of revenge upon all who can by a hate-distorted imagination be regarded as National Socialists or Fascists or 'collaborators'. No doubt it is due to the sluggishness of British and American imaginations that we do not immediately understand these devastating passions; but it is not due to any weakness, it is due to our conscience and our comparatively undisturbed sanity, that we know such passions to be dangerous and wrong. Revenge itself is poison to a society trying to recover its lost peace, but it is far more dangerous when it merely serves as a cloak for viler things, for private spite, for the desire to get rid of rivals, for delation and blackmail; and there is abundant evidence to show that

in many countries it has taken and is still taking such forms. Most dangerous of all, perhaps, is the transformation which, owing to the normal selfishness of human nature, has taken place in the direction of Europe's war-feelings. We began by fighting for a great cause, to save ourselves and all whom we could reach from hideous slavery and oppression. We fought, as we said, for freedom, a word which everyone liked and few troubled to define. That gave us all a fairly plausible reason for hating Germans. But now the Germans are gone and the hatred remains. We have to hate somebody; we can hate our political opponents. We can pretend that they are the same as Germans; they are Nazis or Fascists; if that is too absurd to believe, they are 'cryptofascists'. The normal latent envy of the Have-nots for the Haves, of the unsuccessful for the successful, of the uneducated for the educated, can be called out and translated into class war. And the red light of the Russian Revolution with its 'mass terror' and its 'liquidation of the bourgeoisie' shines to one miserable nation after another as a fascinating beacon through the fog. Civil war is a most horrible thing, but in most civil wars the opposing sides are poorly armed, which somewhat limits their power of direct destructiveness. If civil war comes to Europe, international and unlimited war will come with it.

In war, as the late Lord Ponsonby said, the first casualty is Truth. It is a casualty that shows few signs of recovery. Most of us in this country have been surprised at the unceasing stream of malicious misrepresentation that has been pouring out against the British Empire, especially in its foreign policy. It so happens that British policy at the present time, a policy in which all political parties concur, is one of which Englishmen can be justly proud and on which, in spite of some normal misjudgements and blunders, we need not fear the judgement of history. We worked desperately hard to avoid or prevent the War, and we played at least our full part in enduring and winning it. In India we have worked consistently and unmistakably for a long

period of years to enable the peoples of India to obtain their complete independence, with a constitution of their own choice and an option of remaining in the Empire or going out as they please. Has any empire known to human history ever behaved, and continued under great provocation to behave, with such unselfseeking liberality? Our reward has been a stream of abuse, based partly on ignorance and ingrained prejudice, but partly on deliberate hostile propaganda. To Greece we have shown, as she well deserved, gratitude, friendship, generosity in aid of distress and, when requested, military help in restoring order. We sent our troops at the request of the Greeks and are anxious to remove them as soon as a free national government can be established. The result is that we are abused first for being in Greece at all, secondly for not leaving at once, and thirdly for pressing to hold the elections early so as to enable us to get out as soon as possible. This propaganda is most virulent in the case of Russia and the satellite nations, where the rule is, as the world saw at the U.N. Assembly, to publish all attacks on Great Britain and suppress the answers to them. That is to say, it is made impossible for the peoples of these countries, covering a great part of both Asia and Europe, to have any knowledge of the truth about international affairs. And such ignorance of the truth leads directly and inevitably to that strange state of things described by Darius of old in the Behistun inscription as 'the Rule of the Lie'. It is a rule to which the world is by now well accustomed. Under the Nazi government of Germany there was first a thick curtain shutting off knowledge of the outer world of facts, and next a deliberately manufactured mythology which the average German was compelled to accept. In Russia at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution it was even more complete. A friend of mine who escaped from Russia in 1923, five years after the end of the First World War, was still under the belief that the Germans had won and the 'Western capitalists' been defeated. Under the present government of Russia, and the same is probably

true of the satellite states, British and American news is systematically suppressed or else amazingly transmogrified. Apart from the usual misreports of discussions at conferences we find statements in the Russian Press that 'Persia is simply crawling with American troops' at a time when there are no American troops in Persia. We find pictures of the communal riots in India which have followed the British withdrawal with the letterpress 'Indians massacred by the British'. But the libels, like the old Nazi libels, are deeper and more systematic than that. They are in the school-books. An English interpreter in Russia who was being shown an up-to-date school-book on hygiene noticed a picture of the black-hole of Calcutta 'where the British stifled a hundred-and-forty-six Indians'; when he pointed out that it was the other way, Indians who had stifled the British, he was told that such details were irrelevant; the point was the importance of ventilation. Direct lying is no doubt mingled with sheer ignorance. I am informed by a student of the Russian radio that in it Eleanor Rathbone and John Amery are classed together as Quislings and Vernon Bartlett as a Fascist. How can any sane politics survive in such an atmosphere? It was much the same when Nansen was distributing famine relief in Russia in 1921-2. One of the Government's stipulations was that he should not reveal that the food came as a goodwill gift from foreign and capitalist nations.

No doubt there are fluctuations everywhere. In Russia particularly there have lately been some welcome symptoms of a better tone. A malicious undervaluing of our help in sending arms to Russia by the Arctic route was in January 1947 officially corrected in *Izvestia*. It may be that a change is coming, but at present this 'Rule of the Lie' is a fundamental source of international misunderstanding, ill will, and readiness for war. Most of us hoped that when the War was won the Lie could be swept away, but that has not occurred, nor is it easy to see any method of bringing it about. Broad-

cast§ from England in the appropriate language will do some good, but not much. Most of the people concerned will not have radio sets to receive such messages; those who do may be forbidden to use them. If the message does get through, it may easily be treated as one of the usual tricks of the capitalist enemy and swamped by contrary stories in the national Press.

It used commonly to be said, a few years ago, that one more war in the West would mean the end of civilization, and we have all been congratulating ourselves that the prophecy has proved false. We have had the War, war on a larger and crueller scale than ever; and here we are still civilized and talking airily of 'a better world'. But was the prophecy false after all? Famine spreading over China, India, Europe, and producing its normal consequences of disease and moral disorder. Intrigue raging as never before and aiming at revolution. Mutual massacre, or one-sided massacre, taking the place of political discussion in most places east of Berlin; and in one of the highest centres of European civilization the arrival of peace and freedom symbolized by such acts as the exultant mutilation of the bodies of Mussolini and his mistress. If that sort of thing is not to spread there must be a return to decency, a return to humanity. How can we help being haunted by thoughts of some 'next war' when we are by common consent training all our young men for it, are crippling our productive power and imperilling our moral welfare from the fear of it, are living still exposed to the Rule of the Lie? We are living not merely among the poisonous *sequelae* of war but in the very atmosphere of war; and if we do not escape from it we die.

What way of escape is possible? In the best days of the League we believed that the strength of the united peace-loving nations, if only they would really unite, amounted to something so far greater than that of any probable war-maker that none would dare to contemplate war. That is no longer the case. Two at least of the Big Three, if they did

by any disastrous mishap determine upon aggression, are much too strong to be intimidated by a coalition. No mere military preparation can be a reliable remedy. The remedy must take place in men's minds.

I see only two steps that are really hopeful. The first must be a resolute effort, far stronger than any yet attempted, to spread true information and make impossible the Rule of the Lie. A U.N. radio station and an official U.N. journal, in many languages and controlled by an international committee, would not be very difficult to organize. It should give, as I see it, official statements of fact supplemented by unofficial signed explanations or statements of opinion by responsible and highly qualified individuals. To prevent or obstruct the circulation of these messages should be a definite offence against the rules of U.N., or, to use diplomatic language, an 'unfriendly act'. It is also worth considering whether an International Criminal Court, if ever one should be successfully established, might find a place for libel in its list of International Crimes. The difficulties would be great. Even in municipal law the treatment of libel is a delicate matter and varies in different nations. There would be dangers in bringing a criminal charge against any Great Power or its protégés. Still there might on occasion be immense advantage in having the power to call attention to some important stream of mis-statement, bring it to the bar of public opinion, and convict it as false. How far the matter circulated should be identical for the whole world, or how far it should be adapted to the interests or concerns of different parts of the world, can be left to consideration. Of course such a service cannot aim at being 'snappy' or exciting. It will have gradually to win its way by quite different qualities. Mr. Lippmann in an article on the 'Yellow Press' has pointed out that, though the public likes to have its palate tickled and its prejudices flattered, in the long run it does get sick of news that is not true and begins to demand something reliable. It may well be hoped that

any governments which may be tempted to put their trust in concealment, lies, and false propaganda, would for reasons of *amour propre* and the avoidance of public contempt cease to wish deliberately and confessedly to shut out information.

If that could be organized half the battle would be won. It would only remain that our actions, and the actions of U.N., should be such as will bear the full light of publicity. That is obvious, but it is not nearly enough. All through the period between the two Wars the policies of most nations were fairly peace-loving and innocent, untainted by aggressive intrigues. There can be no denying of the almost universal longing for peace. No one can doubt it who saw the world-wide petition, representing millions of sufferers from war, that waited on the Disarmament Conference at Geneva. Indeed it was that uncritical longing for peace, or at least for 'peace in our time', which caused the isolationism of the American Government, the timidity of the French and British Governments, and thus presented to all the aggressors one after the other their temptation and their opportunity.

There must, of course, be the means and the readiness to defend peace. The U.N. charter provides for that, and all governments have shown that they understand it. But that also is not enough. It avoids one fatal danger but it introduces others. Every step of military preparation and research designed to protect the peace can in the first place be represented by ill-wishers as aggressive war-mongering, and in the second place has in each nation the effect of turning men's thoughts and interest and admiration in the direction of war.

If all these lines of policy fail, what is there that remains? There remain, always, as an ancient Greek letter-writer has daringly phrased it, 'these three, Faith, Hope and Charity; and the greatest of these is Charity'. But do they remain? Do they exist as effective agents? Are they not merely hypocritical disguises for the ordinary selfish wish to be left

in peace in order to enjoy ease and comfort? I think one can answer these points. 'Charity' in a broad sense and on a nation-wide scale does exist. There have been in my lifetime many famines in China, India, and Russia, many terrific disasters in various parts of the world, and I do not think there has been one in which the people of America and the British Dominions, as well as Switzerland and most countries of western Europe, have not genuinely felt sympathy and sent help to the sufferers. One of the first acts of the League of Nations was to support a plan proposed by an Italian for a permanent international organization for the immediate relief of such calamities by all members of the League. Before the Second World War was over international plans were made for the 'relief and rehabilitation' of all the suffering nations. Almost all nations who could join in the work did so. Now that the emergency has proved greater than was feared, greater efforts are being made, both by governments and by private people, often at considerable daily sacrifice of ease and comfort, to relieve human beings in misery, both ex-Allies and ex-enemies. I do not say that the attempts will be successful; the evidence seems to show that they will not. But at least the Charity, the *Caritas*, is there. It is abundant. It is ready, when awakened, to respond to any call. I remember Nansen telling me how, in the campaign after the First World War against pestilence in Poland and Russia, as the mortality among the helpers became increasingly serious, his task was not to appeal for helpers but to stave off the numbers that applied. It is a true claim. An enormous fund of charity and goodwill is there. Why then has it done so little good? Because it has never been allowed to penetrate into the knowledge of the nations that mattered. It has been misinterpreted, ignored, not believed. It has broken against the Marxist myth of the 'inevitable war' which is to signalize the death-throes of Capitalism. Yet this human charity, this good-neighbourliness, is nothing new, nothing original. It is a line of accepted action among almost all



individuals in the advanced nations, except those blinded by a sense of past wrongs or party prejudice, or by the fatal error of mistaking politics for morals. It is the cry of the old Liberals among whom I was reared; the cry of the Churches, of the rabbis, of thoughtful individuals of the most diverse views, from Arthur Koestler to Pierre Ceresole and M. Maritain. It is typified in that action of the Pope addressing children in Rome; indiscriminate children, Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, anything, but all human and of the world's main troubles innocent. Christians, Moslems, Hindus, atheists, do in their hearts accept one great common religion, *Deus est mortali juvare mortalem*. If conscience is not a passion and cannot compete with passion, it has the power to outlast passion and to speak when passion is spent. It is really the voice of normal civilized humanity.

If we can get it known and felt; if we can get it past the borders of totalitarian states, past the sluggish cynicism of the party caucus, the vulgar Press, the public-house, and the race-course, I have the hope, I have the faith, that this great call of Charity will have its effect. There will be no difficulty with the average government, certainly no difficulty with the leaders of thought, the scientists and philosophers. I can speak with some slight knowledge of the governmental members of the League of Nations, with a good twenty years' experience of the numerous savants who assisted in the League Committee of Intellectual Co-operation. I remember well the inquiry made by that committee into 'Modern Means of Spreading Information in the Cause of Peace (1938)'. The means were abundant, the ordinary commercial companies were willing, but where the spirit of peace was most needed the facts were not allowed through.

That wall can and must be broken down; the truth must be allowed through. And if the truth reveals not only facts but the spirit in which average decent humanity makes and faces the facts, we can still have Hope and Faith for the future. It is the message which, in spite of its faulty charter,

in spite of its unconverted members, the United Nations Organization is intended to convey. It is for individual men and women in every nation by the means of the various United Nations Associations to see that the message is heard and felt.

## X

### RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

**B**EFORE trying to sum up the prospects of that state of peace and international co-operation which first the League and then the United Nations Organization were intended to provide, it is helpful to look back on the history of the War years and to see how we stand. In doing so one gets an impression that the motive of the War, the issue about which we have been fighting, has greatly changed. That is not by any means unusual in these long periods of life-and-death struggle. The element of duty or idealism weakens: that of self-preservation or self-interest increases. The Thirty Years War began as a purely religious issue; before the end both parties were glad to get allies where they could find them with no theological questions asked. The great war between Athens and Sparta tended to become in each state a civil war between classes, between those who were called, according to taste, the Many, the Rabble, or the Poor, on the one hand, and the Few, the Good, or even the Fat, on the other. All the names are instructive, and no doubt all tolerably well deserved. This change does not mean that the original statements of the warring Governments were untrue. It only means that in the course of the struggle stronger and commoner desires come more to the front, and the strongest and commonest are generally centred on the self-preservation or aggrandizement of some strongly organized group, whether nation or class.

It is worth while to recall the statements made at the beginning of the First World War, especially perhaps in Mr. Asquith's speech to the House of Commons on 6 August 1914.

No one knows better than the members of the Government the terrible and incalculable sufferings, economic, social, personal, political, which war, especially war between the Great Powers of the world,

must entail. . . . If I am asked what we are fighting for, I can reply in two sentences: in the first place to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life . . . no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. Secondly, to vindicate, in these days when material forces sometimes seems to be the dominant influence and factor in the development of mankind, the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed, in defiance of international good faith, by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering power.

A little later he adds that 'With a clear conscience and conviction this nation is fighting not for aggression, not for the maintenance even of its own selfish interest, but in defence of a principle, the maintenance of which is vital to the civilisation of the world'.

One may notice here not only the horror with which a nation accustomed to law-abiding peace regarded this strange and awful necessity of change, but how first the emphasis is all on legal obligations, as valid in public as in private life, implying a faith in principles of international right as an edifice attacked indeed but still unshaken; our action is mainly an act of police to control a disturber of public order. In the second sentence comes a suspicion that the issue may be more fundamental still; the whole civilization of the world is in peril. By 1939 the great edifice is almost a ruin; there is little mention of law either in the famous words of the king: 'We are called with our allies to meet the challenge of a principle which, if accepted, would be fatal to any civilized order in the world'; or in those of Mr. Chamberlain, when his despairing struggle for peace had failed: 'It is evil things which we shall be fighting against, brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression, and persecution.' It was the same issue as in 1914, but it went deeper. The 'evil things' which in a strain of increasing and almost unimaginable horror had revealed themselves during the Second World War were not to be exorcized by the mere reassertion of international law or the removal of the Hohen-

zollerns. They were a challenge to all accepted principles of right and wrong, a challenge, one may say, to that religion in the heart of man which lies beneath the special creeds of nations and parties.

The great danger is that we may accept as a solution the first unthinking reaction of the 'common man'. The 'common man', unpurified by religious or intellectual ideals, is always self-centred. His mass-egoism is even more ruthless than his personal egoism. If he is a politician he will think the sovereign balm is the triumph of his party; if a wage-earner it will be a solid rise of wages; if a 'resister' in some occupied country it will be the proper punishment of 'collaborators', and so on. Men were led this way and that by many disturbing influences. Even in 1914 Mr. Asquith had spoken of the new claim of 'material force' to be the recognized ruler of the world; he might have added the claim of unreason and wild romance. Above all, ever since 1917 there has been a new factor at work of infinitely disturbing power: the Russian Revolution. The immense sufferings of the Russian soldiers and peasants during the War gave an opportunity to a band of revolutionaries, small in numbers but fanatically resolute and ruthless, to overthrow a great imperial and religious system which had seemed, not only to the general public but to experienced observers on the spot a few weeks before, to be the most firmly rooted in Europe. A party with 10,000 members at most successfully imposed its will on a nation of 160 millions. A multitudinous but sheep-like people, whose age-long loyalty to their traditional masters had been undermined by misgovernment and suffering, collapsed before them.

The success of this small but absolutely resolute band gave to the brilliant Socialist Mussolini the idea of his *fascio*. A story of which he used to boast illustrates his principle. Before his rise to power he was passing, with a small band of 'Arditi' troops, through a pastoral district of north Italy which was harassed by a widespread strike. He spoke to a

group of strikers, ordering them to milk the cows at once. They proceeded to give their arguments for refusing. Mussolini made a sign to his followers, who instantly cut the strikers' throats. He passed on to a neighbouring group, gave the same command, and the cows were milked without argument. Mussolini had seen two important facts, first, that the mass of any population was not organized for resistance: a resolute *fascio* could always beat them. Next, that the nations in the League were just such a mass; they would do anything to avoid war. They had no unity; consequently any determined government, ready at any moment to fight for what it wanted, could have its way.

Hitler, too, learnt the lesson, but whereas the Fascist Revolution in Italy soon started friendly co-operation with revolutionary Russia, the Nazi movement, after some hesitation, proclaimed Russian Communism its 'enemy number one'. The reason for this was partly that at the outset Hitler had to angle for the financial support of the great industrialists, but chiefly that his permanent policy was, as he put it, simply 'Deutschland', and to 'Deutschland' a strong Russia was the chief danger. Relying always on the profound national emotion of defeated and suffering Germany, and exploiting that emotion to the uttermost, he found it a necessity to denounce as well as to imitate the Bolshevik excesses. It is interesting to observe that both Hitler and Mussolini directed their main propaganda against 'capitalist democracy'. It was the name, meant to be abusive, which they gave to free institutions, whether of the Liberal or the Social Democrat type. Stalin in essentials did the same, though he did not use the same language. To him 'democratic' was a word of praise, and meant the totalitarian rule of the Communist party, as representing the proletariat.

Between the wars the relations of the three revolutionary governments were confused and changeable. The early Fascist writers made a great parade of being guided by 'the will of God', not by the mere pleasure of the multitude, like

the democracies, or by the empty phrases of outworn Liberalism, like the 'enlightened parliamentarians'. Thus Mussolini succeeded in making his Concordat with the Vatican, whereas Hitler found his most effective opponents in the Catholic bishops, who, unlike the Lutherans, had strong support and protection outside Germany. Mussolini even undertook to protect Catholic Austria against German aggression and at Stresa, in April 1935, concluded a 'common front' with France and England. Within a year, however, his own predatory ambitions in Abyssinia, and afterwards in Spain, forced him into the Nazi camp.

Relations between Russia and Germany show similar uncertainties and fluctuations. The mutual public denunciations continued, and were reinforced by exhibitions in Munich of Bolshevik atrocities; they were useful for Hitler's domestic propaganda. But the German Communists, according to their own statements, had instructions from Moscow to work with the Nazis for the destruction of the Social Democrats. And the secret rearmament of Germany was for many years carried on in Russia with the connivance of the Russian Government. As this fact has been doubted, I may mention first that it was the attention which he drew to these rearmaments in Russia that led to the exile of my friend Rudolf Olden, and secondly that an honourable German officer who was challenged on the subject at a meeting of the Federation of League of Nations Societies promised to make inquiries in Berlin and to send me evidence to disprove the charge. He did make inquiries, but he sent no report.

The crucial test came in 1939 when Nazi aggression had broken Austria and Czechoslovakia and was on the point of attacking Poland. In public, as late as July 1939, *Izvestia* proclaimed that Russian policy was 'to stand for the formation of a general peace front capable of halting the further development of Fascist aggression'. This Peace-Front policy was, of course, a vital necessity for Britain and France,

and seemed to be the obvious interest of Russia also. It might well have prevented the War. Lenin, with his principles of self-determination for all the subject peoples of the Russian Empire, might well have agreed to it; but the Stalin-Molotov régime had other desires. The War of 1914-18 had been a war of liberation for all Europe, notably for Poland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland. Those countries had been set free when Russia was weak; Russia was now strong and able to reclaim her old empire. She was soon, amid world-wide disapproval, to plunge into an unprovoked, strategical war against Finland. Her eyes were now on Poland and the Baltic republics. Obviously Britain and France could not, without violating all their principles, be parties to such re-subjection of the nations for whose freedom they had fought. Indeed, they had just defied Hitler by a treaty guaranteeing Poland against 'any attack which threatened Polish independence'. Molotov dallied with the British diplomatic mission for several months and then in August announced the conclusion of a treaty of friendship with Ribbentrop. In September, as soon as the German invasion of western Poland proved a success, Russian armies moved into Poland from the east. The Polish peasants, who thought with joy that their Slav brethren had come to help them, were rapidly undeceived. The Russian Empire had come in full fury to claim its own, and Molotov was presently able to announce the disappearance from the map of Europe of 'this ugly creation of the Versailles treaty', an independent Poland. The Baltic Republics, being equally 'ugly', disappeared a little later, and the two great law-breakers stood openly together, Russia not actually fighting but supporting Germany with propaganda and forming the chief source of supply for the German armies.

This change of front was not an act of mere cynicism. There was from the beginning a profound psychological identity between the two movements, Nazi and Bolshevik. Both had set emotion above reason and rejected all moral or



religious scruple that might hinder or delay their great end. Both were addressed to nations bewildered by suffering, and spoke the language which sufferers love to hear, announcing a new heaven and a new earth. Both knew they were hated and returned the hate. Above all they hated the law-abiding world-order set up by the conquerors of 1918, which left Germany humiliated and hopeless, and Russia partly starving and partly dependent on foreign charity. Both practised 'mass terror' to a degree previously unknown. What were the lives of a few million bourgeois reactionaries compared with the realization of the great apocalypse? Of course, the two heavens were not quite the same or even compatible. In one, the noble German nation would settle down to a thousand years of triumphant peace, with all Judaeo-Christian weaknesses purged away and inferior races reduced to due subordination. In the other, all the downtrodden proletariates of the world, white, brown, or black, would have united, struck down their tyrants, and entered a free paradise of equality under Russian Communist dictatorship. The community of hatred was clear and immediate; the difference of ideal was too distant to matter; but what did matter was the question of leadership, was it to be Germany or Russia?

These apocalyptic visions are important as forming an emotional background to the two revolutionary movements, but of course they were only a background. Such movements form an explosive compound of idealism and ravenous egoism, of devotion and brutal ambition. The dreams and wild promises live on in the emotion of the multitude, while day-to-day policy falls into the hands of determined political partisans, thinking for the most part strictly in terms of material interest.

National rivalry soon proved too strong for continued diplomatic co-operation. In June 1941 came Hitler's sudden and surprising attack upon Russia. Russia was immediately welcomed by Mr. Churchill into the Anglo-French Alliance,

with no untactful reminders. The survivors of some hundreds of thousands of Poles who had been prisoners in Asiatic Russia were informed that they were now not enemies but friends, and must go and fight the Germans. Poor people, they were soon to be enemies again; they had committed the unforgivable sin of fighting for a free Poland! The motives of Hitler's attack on Russia have never been fully explained. He himself defended it as an attempt to forestall a Russian attack on Germany, a plausible enough suggestion except for the fact that he was still in the main successful, and a prudent associate would hardly have turned against him until he was approaching defeat.

Hitler's action put totalitarian Russia definitely in alliance with the nations whom she disliked most, and whose law-abiding methods and liberal principles were most at variance with her own ideas. The ultimate victory was secured by the joint efforts of a band of allies quite as ill-assorted and ill-suited for continuous co-operation as those who defeated Napoleon in 1814. Without pressing the analogy too hard we may note that, like England then, the English-speaking block to-day is remarkable as having no ambitions in Europe while the other European nations are distracted by contrary aims; and also that, as most countries had in the early nineteenth century the embarrassment of pro-French radical parties at home, so in the early stages of the Second World War most countries had Communist parties, at Moscow's direction, sabotaging the effort of their own governments. Not that purely ideological differences have much effect except among small coteries of intellectuals; what count with the great masses are either direct interests, whether of class or nation, or else long-ingrained and almost unconscious habits of behaviour. England and Russia do not greatly change, whatever principles their governments profess.

It is comforting to reflect that in the Congress of Vienna and afterwards, though there were constant clashes of interest and differences in national standards, there was after all no

war. On the other hand, continued co-operation between this country and the authoritarian empires proved impossible. Differences of principle and of national tradition, even more than differences of interest, compelled Britain to reject the Holy Alliance, to secede even from the more moderate Quadruple Alliance, and to seek the sympathies of free democratic America, north and south. A somewhat similar problem is before us now, with one inconvenient difference. It is clear we could then avoid war and at the same time avoid intimacy with a government whose principles and practices were radically different from ours. That is now more difficult since British and Russian interests touch one another, and even to some extent conflict with one another, in so many places, especially in Europe and the Middle East, not to mention the slippery bog-land of propaganda where a deep-ingrained habit of anti-British prejudice has been strengthened by the Marxist myth of the 'inevitable war'. This is a problem of skilled diplomacy on which only those with special knowledge have a right to speak. The difficulty had already arisen in Sir Edward Grey's time. It was no longer possible to remain politely aloof from Russia; our points of contact or friction had become too numerous. Grey succeeded in establishing the *Entente* with Russia and in keeping up cordial relations with Sassonov, though he sometimes admitted that Russia caused him more trouble than all the other nations of Europe put together. However, the two nations were at that time united by the bond of a common fear.

At present, as far as one can judge, it seems that the policy of persistent friendliness combined with firmness on points of principle, pursued equally by Mr. Bevin and Mr. Eden, has produced an improving atmosphere on the 'high levels'.

It is clear as daylight that no government in the world would dream of making war on Russia, and the available evidence seems to show that no Russian government, in

spite of its unco-operative diplomacy, has any actual wish to break the peace. The war losses of Russia have been enormous, her internal condition is said to be impoverished and disorganized. Nevertheless, according to the ordinary standards of history, the Russian government is exposed to some extraordinarily strong temptations. As it was said in 1815 that Europe had only exchanged its fear of France for a fear of Russia, so it was constantly emphasized by Hitler that if his enemies were unwise enough to destroy Germany they would immediately find themselves confronted by something far more dangerous. There is now not a nation left on the continent of Europe capable of any effectual resistance to a Russian attack. Were it not for Great Britain there would be no obstacle on this side of the Atlantic to Russia's attainment of that prize which has dazzled so many conquerors to their ruin, the complete mastery of Europe. Few have ever resisted that temptation. But that is not all. Over a large part of Europe the existing nations are not merely impoverished and discontented; they are scarcely capable of maintaining life except by American and British assistance, and at the same time are torn by violent civil strife. When any strong and well-disciplined state has on its borders nations in that condition, history shows that, in the mere interests of peace and order, it is often almost compelled to assert its power and either annex the disorderly regions or control them by puppet governments of its own. British India offers many examples of such virtual compulsion. The immense conquests of territory in Asia achieved by Russian armies in the latter part of the nineteenth century were not entirely due to aggressive ambition: they were partly necessitated by the weakness and disorder of the small communities on her border. The continuance of similar conditions in Europe might well lead to similar wars. Europe must be saved and strengthened, not in order to oppose Russian interests, but to avert the disorders that lead to war and to provide the stability that is requisite for peace.

If this particular source of trouble can be corrected, the danger of any aggressive war by Russia becomes much less. There is, of course, continuous danger in the customary attitude of a totalitarian state to its neighbours. They must be either subjects or enemies; independent neighbours are neither tolerated nor understood, and consequently are almost forced into a position of fear and unfriendliness. There is danger in the alleged Russian fear of being attacked,<sup>1</sup> a fear which seems to be deliberately cultivated for bargaining purposes. There is also the fact that Russia with her vast spaces and widely scattered industries could presumably stand up to atomic bombs and rocket planes and bacteria and other devilries of modern war far better than Britain or western Europe, perhaps even better than the United States. Still, the horror of the recent war seems to have struck deep roots in the Russian people. The Government may reflect that the War of 1914 overthrew the Czardom, and a third war might shake the present régime. The most imminent danger is that, if Europe remains in its present helpless condition, a Russian *Führer* may promise his people a great aggrandizement without war by means of a steadily aggressive diplomacy. True, that is what Hitler did, and his example is not encouraging; but Russia starts with far greater power and greater prospects of success.

The whole attitude of Russia towards the United Nations seems to show her essential policy: she dislikes co-operation with foreigners, especially non-communist foreigners, but she does wish to be saved from war. Her whole interest seems to be centred in the Security Council. She starts by refusing to co-operate in U.N.R.R.A., or in the Food and Agricultural Organization or in the proposed World Food Board or even in European Transport and Communication, not to

<sup>1</sup> It is chiefly grounded on the joint Allied intervention in 1918 in order to restore, if possible, a government which would continue the war, and at any rate to recover the great stores of British war material which the Bolsheviks were, under the peace of Litovsk, sending to Germany.

speak of the International Refugee Organization or still bolder projects like U.N.E.S.C.O. Indeed it must feel strange to a Russian minister of the Molotov type to find himself a member of a body specially planned to do just what his own 'closed economy' state is determined not to do. He can, of course, confine himself to fighting for the definite interests of Russia and her satellites, and to provision against any aggressive war; still he can hardly help feeling a strange atmosphere about him. However non-committal he may be, in a Society of Nations he has to meet foreigners and confer and make treaties. He is brought into a place where agreement and co-operation are almost the breath of life, and may well find it increasingly hard to remain quite uninfected. It is not without significance that Russia has accepted the project of a special 'European Economic Council'.

It is worth remembering also that some Russian statesmen, such as Maisky and Litvinov, and even Lenin himself, have shown understanding of the Western outlook, not only appreciating the 'indivisibility of peace' but seeing that peace depends upon mutual confidence. It is well also, if we speculate on the future, to remember Tolstoy and Turgenev and Dostoievsky and the magnificent achievements of the Russian imagination. I see that a leading literary magazine in Moscow is already getting into trouble for its lack of the 'correct political spirit'. Russian musicians have been censured for writing music which was not sufficiently Communist, but afterwards forgiven and honoured. It must be difficult to keep the Russian genius for ever in a straight jacket. Will not those wonderful imaginative and religious forces some day break through the hard shell of Marxist materialism and traditional Russian diplomacy?

That, however, is an uncertain and distant possibility. On the whole it seems to me clear that neither in geography nor in psychology can the U.S.S.R. be regarded as part of Europe. It is far too big. It is a continent in itself. It is Asiatic in its rejection of European ways of thought, in its all-or-nothing

extremism, its acquiescence in despotic rule, its indifference to human life and suffering, its contempt for 'bourgeois morality' and personal freedom. The U.S.S.R. seems specially calculated to form one of those regions contemplated in chapter viii of the U.N. Charter. It is one of the clearly marked groups into which humanity is divided, like the British Commonwealth, the pan-American Union, China, India, and, it is devoutly to be hoped, Europe. These 'regions', to use the language of the Charter, are to make 'arrangements' of their own, inside U.N. and subject to the approval of U.N., because they have special characters of their own, special problems to deal with and dangers to provide against. It is in part a mere matter of devolution, and arises from practical necessity. For example, in the old League of Nations, though there was no provision in the Covenant for regional organizations, something of the kind took place informally. The British Empire had periodical meetings during the Assembly; so had the Little Entente, the Scandinavians and, I believe, the South Americans. There was, of course, no suggestion of hostility between the groups; they were not 'blocks' for defence against outsiders, but groups of nations with many common interests and a natural desire to consult one another. Also, it is important to realize, no single group was self-enclosed and exclusive. This country had its chief ties with the rest of the Commonwealth, but in some matters it was closely concerned with Europe, in some with the United States. The U.S.S.R. would in some respects have special relations with Britain and Europe, in others with the Far East or, considering the 30 million Moslems in her Empire, with the great Moslem group in the Middle East. But it does not merge in them. It is a distinctive multi-national unit. The leaders of the U.S.S.R. believe they have attained a form of society which is greatly superior to those of other nations, and must naturally exercise great care in excluding the infection of foreign influences, in enforcing the uniform teaching of

'Communist Truth' in education, and preventing by totalitarian methods any spread of heresy or weakness.

But whatever the part chosen by that colossal unknown un-European Power, whether she prefers to be an obstacle, a decisive help, or an uninterested spectator, there is one supreme task now incumbent upon the Western World and most of all upon Britain. It is to repair the damages of war, particularly in Europe. The nations of Europe, through the great act of German aggression and its consequences, have been throughout two wars engaged in destroying one another. The sufferings of the occupied countries have been unspeakable; the sufferings of the people of Germany are now worse than most. People talk glibly of 'national guilt' and 'righteous punishment', but such language covers some confusion of thought. In these terrific herd-movements it is difficult to pass judgement on individuals. Gregarious animals by nature go with the herd, and even the leaders often did not originally know whither they were leading. Besides, if every one who does not boldly resist a national contagion, every school-master who has agreed to teach nonsense rather than see his family starve, every soldier who has obeyed a military order without first inquiring whether the order was legitimate, is to be condemned as a criminal, it is hard to know who, in any country, can escape. In war it is for the most part the innocent, or comparatively innocent, who suffer most. From antiquity onwards that is the usual story: *delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi*. Massacre, starvation, beggary, homelessness, and active persecution have made abundant victims in most countries, and have left behind them uncontrolled passions of revenge and prejudice, understandable enough, Heaven knows, yet always injurious, always certain to prevent recovery. If there is to be any hope for the civilization which Europe has inherited from its magnificent past, from Athens, Jerusalem, Rome, the Christian Church, and the great humanitarian movements of the nineteenth century, the nations must unite in their common interest and seek no longer to destroy



themselves and one another, but to save. The task may, of course, be too hard for us. We may all be too much wrapped up in our wars and class interests and partisan vendettas to realize that, as a matter of plain economics, we cannot recover our own prosperity without co-operating for the recovery of the whole to which we belong, even if that includes the prosperity of various ex-enemies, heretics, and political opponents. People tell me that our most deeply wronged allies, the Poles, the Dutch, the Czechs, even the French, can never forgive their wrongs, never co-operate with their oppressors; it only angers them if we, who have not suffered as they have, talk about such things. That may be so, but if it is so they are lost.

Some great movement for unity and constructive reconciliation in Europe is an absolute necessity for civilization, and the obvious leader in any such movement must be this country. We have not been maddened by suffering. Our long insular security has left us generally unperturbed by fear and the evil passions roused by fear. I do not think it is national prejudice which makes me—an old 'Pro-Boer' and Home-Ruler and Radical—believe that Britain is, on the whole, and particularly since the Peace of Vereeniging, a remarkably well-behaved nation. We are freer than most nations from violent political views or prejudices, and are thus good mediators. Moreover, the wish to help human suffering is an old national habit in this country.

Still, these thirty years of war and policies derived from war have left a terrible mark upon all nations. Some of our allies are still pursuing their vendettas. The lack of food and coal throughout the world makes all 'relief and rehabilitation' doubly difficult. Of the peoples who might help most the United States is far away and has come almost to the end of its immense generosity. Great Britain is herself in serious economic straits. Besides, for all nations it needs a resolute effort if they are fully to throw off the war atmosphere and re-learn the lessons of Christian ethics, or at least those of the

despised Liberal nineteenth century. We ourselves have no cause for complacency. When all allowance is made, the record of our control in Germany has come near to being a deep national disgrace. Lord Beveridge, a man not given to exaggeration, speaks of our zone in Germany as 'a centre of misery generating hate'. Mr. Richard Law, one of the most respected of Conservative statesmen, says that we have 'there in the heart of western Europe twenty to thirty million human beings rotting to death' and speaks of a 'moral vacuum' even more alarming than the physical distress.

The explanation is, I think, apart from lack of mental breadth and alertness in individuals, that common error of governments with wide responsibilities, a failure in co-ordination. British policy towards Germany has two obvious tasks: a special military task, to prevent any revival of Germany's power of aggressive war, and the normal humane task, incumbent on all decent governments, to see that the subject people for whom we are responsible do not sink into destitution and despair. The second of these tasks ought to have been put first. The danger of a collapse into hopeless misery was imminent; the danger of a German revival comparatively remote. But, misled perhaps by the well-nourished condition of the Germans, who had been fed during the war on the resources of the subject nations but had now almost nothing left, our government set its army to continue the simple straightforward work of destruction and gave little thought to the fact that it was reducing an already destitute people to extreme misery. It was hardly good economics to let our zone be so impoverished as to cost us £80 millions a year and to seek security by simply destroying the sources of wealth in Germany instead of planning to internationalize them. It was scarcely good diplomacy, after our incessant boasts that we came 'not as conquerors but as liberators', to allow our own occupying troops and officials three times as much food as the population for whom we were responsible. It was worse, to requisition abundant

housing and furniture from cities like Hamburg, whose citizens our bombs had rendered almost homeless and whose docks and fishing we had thought it politic to destroy. It was hardly common sense to destroy railway engines and electricity plants at Essen while crying out for them as necessities fifty miles away.

Bad as this was, German savants with whom I have had communications lay still more stress on what Mr. Law calls the 'moral vacuum', the lack of any standard now that the Nazi standard of *Deutschland über Alles* has gone, the intellectual isolation which results from the long-closed frontier of Nazi thought, and the absence of any clear expectation of the future. War is a dire leveller. I have before me at this moment a powerful Greek cartoon showing some bloated German officers sitting at a gorgeous feast while starving Greek children are standing just outside the window. One cannot help wondering with a sinking heart what that cartoon would now suggest in some parts of Germany. Is the chief memorial of the 'Liberators of Europe' in the minds of the liberated to be the tales of hunger and enforced homelessness, the stench of ruined cities with the bodies of unnumbered thousands of women and children crushed or burnt alive under the rubble, followed by an almost unending series, year after year, of executions in cold blood: 34,000 prisoners in the British zone alone still awaiting trial, 20,000 of them for capital war-crimes? Castlereagh and Wellington never permitted such things. Is our present democracy really less humane, or only less wise and experienced, than the Tories of 1815?

A case could be made out here for a grim, if not a despairing, conclusion. But it would not be a true case. All that these facts show is the desperate difficulty of escaping from war and the horrible sequelae of war, especially from a war waged by a whole nation. Wellington's wars were waged by a small professional army with aristocratic leaders, not much affected by national passions and not absolutely dependent

on the votes of a whole country stirred to its depths. A true peace now can only be reached when, in Mr. Churchill's words, 'some hundreds of millions of men and women are resolved to do right instead of wrong and to gain as their reward blessing instead of cursing'. That is of necessity a slow process. The leaders of European democracies, however enlightened, have a much harder task in persuading whole nations to change their ways of thought than Wellington had in seeing what was right and doing it. Besides it is difficult now to apportion responsibility. There is the world shortage; there is the Potsdam Agreement, differently carried out by the four allies; there is the seizure of German food by the Russians; there is the awful problem of 'Displaced Persons'; Jews and Poles and Nazi slave-labourers and Germans expelled from Silesia and East Prussia; there is the persistent confusion of allied policies 'at the highest levels'. Governments move slower than individuals; allies move slower than governments; and it is always easier to kill than to make alive, to destroy than to rebuild.

Yet the healing spirit is there. It is alive and passionately struggling against these odds. As soon as the general facts of European distress became known in this country and in America there came an overwhelming desire to remedy them. Apart from the great official organs such as U.N.R.R.A., numbers of individuals besieged the doors of the many societies represented in C.O.B.S.R.A. for permission to work, paid or unpaid, in Europe for the relief of our allies in the occupied countries. And not for our allies alone. As soon as news came through of the sufferings of our late enemies British feeling rose without hesitation to the task of helping them too. Of course such movements always come from a minority. The great mass of any nation is concerned with its own daily bread and pleasures and amusements; it does not think about foreign problems except in terms of old undisturbed prejudices. The great tide of humane feeling in this case actually frightened some people. It was denounced by

those who could not get over their war-neuroses. It was grumbled at by the multitudes who only wanted more beef and beer for themselves. It had little encouragement from the Government. It was a genuine stirring of conscience and human pity in hundreds of thousands if not millions of individual private persons, backed by almost everyone who had personal contact with the facts. In quarters where I happen to have some personal knowledge I note that Oxford, not a rich town, had already sent by the first week of January 1947 £20,000 to European Relief; that subscribers to 'Save Europe Now', out of their strictly limited rations, had sent 32,000 parcels of food and clothing to Europe in the first week or ten days after Christmas. These things are not great in themselves, but they are signs of something great. They show that, even in this envious and war-distracted world, the passion of human charity is alive and at work, and, I should judge, irresistibly on the increase. The same movement is notably strong in the more distant English-speaking countries and in those European nations, like Sweden and Switzerland, which have not been through the torments of German or Russian occupation.

The healing spirit is there. The question is how far it can be extended and become the prevailing influence. The world is faced with an inevitable choice. It must become better than it is or worse; fatally worse.

• Politically speaking we are faced by a great struggle, taking many forms, between the forces of concord and discord, law and violence, reason and wild romance, 'bourgeois morality' and the crimes of the fanatic, which may, I think, be simplified into one fundamental and undecided conflict between the Liberal and the Totalitarian state. Some, of course, will say between Socialism and Capitalism, but that is not a difference of principle, only of degree, and a difference irrelevant to the main issue. The average Social Democrat is Liberal, the Communist Totalitarian.

Nationally, the issue will largely depend on the amount of

influence which different nations exercise. America counts for most, but Britain has undoubtedly emerged from these years of struggle with great moral prestige. She began by striving to the last moment for peace. She fought alone, or almost alone, against greatly superior forces. During the worst years, as Sir Harold Butler has put it, she was the centre of Europe, the home and refuge of all the war-oppressed nations. When victorious she made no claim for any gain or aggrandizement, and persevered, despite extreme provocations, in the fulfilment of her self-denying promises to India and Egypt. Nowhere has she lifted a hand to seize territory or power for herself. On the other hand, Britain has suffered enormous losses and incurred debts greater than she can pay to her various allies. Her economic future is heavily clouded. She has retired from large territories and lost control of her great Asiatic armies. It is only if the moral forces begin to recover and predominate in the next generation or two that Britain will have her great opportunity. Her position in Europe is in many ways unique; and if what these distracted countries want is 'not a hangman, not a judge, but a physician', as Andreas Michalopoulos has phrased it, the European nation best fitted for that part is Britain.

The need is certainly urgent. Of the great regions into which, on the lines of the U.N. Charter, the world may be divided, not all are in good health. The United States is strong, safe, and wealthy; the pan-American Union, with some internal troubles, much the same; the enormous territories of the U.S.S.R., though badly ravaged, are in no danger; most of Asia, indeed, is far from stability, China racked with long war, India sick with the growing-pains of a new-found and exotic freedom. But Europe, our nearest neighbour and the ancient centre of all our arts and sciences, all our religious and intellectual culture, is still weltering in disorder, material ruin, and the poison of mutual malignities. Here, I think, if only our own internal conditions remain sound, lies a great and heroic task to which this nation more

than any other is called. The highest culture in the world must not be allowed to die.

Of course Europe is not everything. There are other continents. The Christian tradition is not everything. There are other religions, other civilizations, whose existence must always be borne in mind by true believers in the United Nations Organization. But, subject always to that supreme world-embracing purpose, each nation, like every individual, must try to do the duty that lies most close at hand. The standard of world civilization as a whole can best be saved from the general flattening-out with which it is threatened if each separate region or division of mankind succeeds in keeping high the fulfilment of its own ideal, while all co-operate in the united effort to establish lasting peace. For this continent the obvious instruments will be the Economic Council for Europe recently set up by the U.N. Assembly and the European Committee of U.N.E.S.C.O.<sup>1</sup> In economics, one may hope, obvious community of interest may lead European nations to discover lines of 'functional co-operation' and, by the habit of co-operation, to acquire some common loyalty or community of feeling. But for those of us who believe at all in the ideals of our Christian or Hellenic civilization it is no good pretending that economics are the whole of life. Beyond all material interests, behind all the clash of creeds and the illusions of mass egoism, there is in most good men, as in all good soldiers, some sense of values, of obligations, of things of beauty, which are somehow beyond question and which, at whatever cost of endurance, humanity must not betray.

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written the whole prospect has been changed by the magnificent proposal of the American Secretary of State for the immediate relief and ultimate restoration of Europe.

## APPENDIX

### I. PURPOSES FOR WHICH A ROYAL CHARTER WAS GRANTED TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION BY HIS MAJESTY GEORGE V

**W**HEREAS in the year 1915 a Society was established under the name of the League of Nations Society and in the year 1918 another Society was established under the name of the League of Free Nations Association and in the same year both the said Societies were amalgamated into one society under the name of the League of Nations Union:

The main objects of the said Society are as follows:

1. To secure the wholehearted acceptance by the British people of the League of Nations as the guardian of international right, the organ of international co-operation, the final arbiter in international differences, and the supreme instrument for removing injustices which may threaten the peace of the world.
2. To foster mutual understanding, goodwill, and habits of co-operation and fair dealing between the peoples of different countries.
3. To advocate the full development of the League of Nations so as to bring about such a world organization as will guarantee the freedom of nations, act as trustee and guardian of backward races and undeveloped territories, maintain international order, and finally liberate mankind from war and the effects of war.

### II. THE NATIONAL DECLARATION

#### BALLOT FORM

#### *Questions*

1. Should Great Britain remain a member of the League of Nations?
2. Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreement?
3. Are you in favour of the all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement?
4. Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?



5. Do you consider that if a nation insists on attacking another the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by
- (a) economic and non-military measures?
- (b) if necessary, military measures?

*Answers*

<i>Question</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Doubtful</i>	<i>Abstentions</i>	<i>Christian Pacifist</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	11,090,387	355,883	10,470	102,425		11,559,165
2	10,470,489	862,775	12,062	213,839		11,559,165
3	9,533,558	1,689,786	16,976	318,845		11,559,165
4	10,417,329	775,415	15,076	351,345		11,559,165
5a	10,027,608	635,074	27,255	855,107	14,121	11,559,165
5b	6,784,368	2,351,981	40,893	2,364,441	17,482	11,559,165

Approximately 9½ million of these votes were recorded in England, 1 million in Scotland, 1 million in Wales, and 70,000 in Northern Ireland.

## III. INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION

*The following sketch was originally written for a Meeting of the British Association which was not held owing to the outbreak of war in 1939. Some additions have been made since that time, but I have made no attempt at covering the whole ground. A book on the subject by Emil Leimdörfer is finished but not yet published. A large, though far from complete, collection of C.I.C. literature is in the Library of All Souls College.*

## THE IDEA

THE experience of mankind has proved that nations in the modern world are not independent units but members of one society, and the conscience of mankind has partially, if not perfectly, accepted the consequences. Nations can destroy one another or help one another; but one cannot destroy the rest and prosper in their ruin. The League of Nations, better called by its French name, La Société des Nations, is a recognition of this fact and of the new duties and opportunities which result therefrom.

Different sections of the League Organization provide for co-operation in different matters. The central task, and the most difficult, is co-operation in politics; central because that means the prevention of war, and if that work fails all the League's other work is made almost impossible; difficult because it is in politics that the chief enemies of co-operation, Nationalism, and the unlimited sovereignty of states, find their natural home. But other sections provide for co-operation in Finance and Economics, in Communication and Transport, in Health services, in Humanitarian services. The International Labour Office again provides for co-operation in its own vast field. But there is another field in which active and continuous co-operation between nations takes place already and has a powerful though unseen influence for good, which may by due encouragement become more powerful still; that is the whole sphere of the intellect, of art, science, learning, and literature. For this no provision was made in the Covenant.

When a man of science studies or discusses with colleagues some new discovery in physics or mathematics; when a lover of painting studies a picture of Rembrandt or Velasquez or Michelangelo; when a lover of literature reads *Faust* or *Hamlet* or the *Divina Commedia*, differences of nationality fade into nothingness; all that remains is the interest and delight of man in the highest works of man, and the intimate sympathy which results therefrom between artists or thinkers of different nations. Wilamowitz, the famous German Hellenist, tells a story of the war of 1870, when he was a Prussian cavalry officer, and was billeted on a French school-master in Chartres; how he found a copy of Racine lying on the table and began discussing it; how the school-master expressed his admiration for Racine's *Phèdre* and Wilamowitz argued that its original, Euripides' *Hippolytus*, was even better; the two talked and quoted until late into the night, and a friendship was built up in the midst of war itself between two official enemies. A few weeks ago, turning on the wireless to hear the news and turning it on a trifle too early, I heard thunders and thunders of applause, applause which seemed as if it would never cease. Looking at the *Radio Times* I found it was a concert; Toscanini, an Italian, was conducting a symphony of Beethoven, a German, by means of an English orchestra. Feelings in England were particularly strong against Germany and Italy. But the audience at the Queen's Hall had no thought of that. They were absorbed in a great torrent of emotion called forth by intellectual co-operation.

There was no provision for this in the Covenant. Still, it was asked, could not the League of Nations, besides all its official, material, and political organs of co-operation, have some organ for increasing this artistic, scientific, imaginative link between the nations, for which we have no single word but which the French call *spirituel* or *intellectuel*? The philosopher Bergson had faith in this idea. He converted Léon Bourgeois and Lord Balfour to a belief in it, and on the joint proposal of Great Britain and France the Assembly in 1921 created the 'C.I.C.', or Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, to 'encourage and facilitate' (*provoquer et faciliter*) international movements in this direction.

Why should such an organization be wanted? Will not the necessary co-operation spring up of itself, as in the instances we have just given? It may do so in subjects such as music, art, and pure science, which are not dependent on language and not to any vital degree on national tradition; but as soon as we venture beyond these safe regions, obstacles to international understanding occur at every step. The difference of language is only the first obstacle, though certainly a formidable one. Thousands of educated people no doubt can read books in one or more foreign language, can give orders in an hotel, or even, with due help, deliver a scientific lecture. But very few can express themselves freely and naturally and without fear of misunderstanding in a foreign language. The difficulty extends far beyond any question of mere translation. Every language is a national tradition; and every national tradition is full of unexpressed assumptions, attitudes of mind which are taken for granted among the sharers of that tradition and are indeed the essential condition of the mutual confidence and ease of intercourse which they enjoy. These unexpressed assumptions in the human mind are like the submerged parts of an iceberg, which are eight times as great as the part that shows above the water. We all know how difficult conversation can sometimes be among people of the same language if their personal traditions and standards are different. This difficulty is almost inevitable in most forms of intellectual co-operation between persons of different nationalities; not in all subjects, of course, but in all that large domain which is dependent on national experience, history, literature, tradition, and the customs of daily life, in which so much is assumed and so little needs to be expressed.

One of the first necessities for successful international co-operation

is to discover these assumptions and get them understood. That can only be done by the method of conference; that is, by personal intercourse and conversation between the people concerned. The need is most obvious, perhaps, when the co-operation affects national institutions such as universities. The members of a University Conference are generally well above the average in intelligence and goodwill; they are engaged essentially on the same task and faced by the same fundamental problems. Their co-operation ought to be particularly easy, but it is not. Notably their customs are different and their ordinary technical terms incommensurate with another. *The Glossary of University Terms* recently drawn up for the Federation of University Women abandons the attempt to translate and gives full explanations instead. And suppose these explanations are mastered, so that a careful reader understands the functions of a 'Fellow and Tutor', a *Privatdozent*, and a *Rector Magnificus*, there will still remain all kinds of unresolved and unrealized difficulties of adjustment. Different nations will have quite different views, for example, as to a University's normal attitude towards the Government, towards Jews and foreigners, towards students' societies, towards women students, games, the use of the vacation, and so on. Hence the need, in international dealings, of conference, repeated conference, mutual intimacy, and patience. It has been wittily said of the League of Nations that it 'touches nothing which it does not adjourn'. There is some truth in the charge; but it should be added that the adjournments give the negotiating parties time to think, and when they meet again they are generally nearer to understanding one another.

#### THE ORGANIZATION

1. The International Committee (President since 1928 Gilbert Murray; previously Henri Bergson, 1921-5; H. A. Lorentz 1925-8).

The Committee consisted of fifteen to twenty persons of different nationalities, chosen by the League Council as eminent in different branches of learning; thus Bergson represented philosophy and France, Mme Curie physics and Poland, the present writer classical studies and England. We avoided having two representatives of any one country, and tried not to omit entirely the representation of any particular branch of study.

2. The Institute (President of Managing Committee, M. Édouard Herriot; previously M. Paul Painlevé; Director, M. Henri Bonnet).

We made various plans for 'encouraging and facilitating' increased intimacy between nations in art and science. As a first step we sought to reconcile the academies and learned societies which had once been freely international but had split into two hostile groups during the last War. But we had no secretariat, almost no staff, no means of action. A committee which only met once a year, however learned or well intentioned, could obviously not effect much. Bergson, our first President, made an appeal to all the governments, and the French responded by offering us premises in the Palais Royal in Paris and an income of a million francs—afterwards increased to two million when the value of the franc fell. This was the 'Institute of Intellectual Co-operation' which, with its Director and staff, formed the executive organ of the C.I.C. It carried out the work laid on it by the Committee.

3. Various National Committees of Intellectual Co-operation in separate nations, then amounting to some forty-two, which carried on the work each in its own country, advised the C.I.C. and received its suggestions. They formed the basis on which the organization rested, and held a general conference every three or four years. (President of the British Committee, Sir Frederic Kenyon.)

4. Many allied or dependent bodies, some of them old societies with similar aims which joined in the work of the C.I.C., most of them new creations which had grown up with the growth of the work. The Museums Office in Brussels (President, Don Salvador de Madariaga) was specially concerned with art, and published a quarterly called *Museion*. The Permanent Committee of Arts and Letters (President, M. Paul Valéry) conducted discussions, conversations, and correspondence. A permanent Sub-committee on Education tried to keep the teaching of all subjects permeated by consciousness of the facts of international co-operation and of the idea of a Society of Nations. These were all in some sense dependent on the main C.I.C. Other bodies were entirely independent, such as the Council of Scientific Unions or the International Studies Conference; for these the Institute merely supplied secretarial service.

The method followed was practically always the same: conference between savants of different nationalities following upon preparatory studies carried out by the Institute or by particular experts chosen for the purpose. Conferences might be large or small. A Mathematical Conference on the Application of the Calculus of Probabilities to

concrete problems had forty-five members; the general conference of Universities had over a hundred. Others have had as few as five.

#### THE KINDS OF CONFERENCE

The Conferences were of different kinds and might be classified in different ways. For example:

A. Conferences for practical co-operation between existing national institutions, such as:

(i) *Universities*. The large conference mentioned above had left behind it a permanent committee of representatives to discuss common problems, remove needless barriers and superfluities, arrange equivalences and compare methods. Without in the least affecting the individual character of the separate universities, it was hoped that some approach might be made to that intimate collaboration which existed between the universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, when they still had a common language and belonged to a common Church. A beginning was made with a comparative study of the organization and work of the universities of different countries, and two volumes were published. The Chairman was Sir Frank Heath.

(ii) *Libraries, Museums, and Picture Galleries*. The authorities in charge conferred on problems of method, exhibition, exchange of information, and photographs; in some cases also of the loan of books and manuscripts; and generally on enabling the institutions to give the best help to one another and to the general public. This work mostly fell to the Museums Office, which published various handbooks; e.g. on the Preservation of Paintings, &c., on methods of Exhibition; and of Excavation. A conference at Cairo on Excavations resulted in a 'Gentleman's Agreement' among excavators of different nations, which removed some tiresome causes of international friction.

(iii) *Teachers' Associations*. The Institute was represented at the various international conferences of Teachers' Associations, and organized annual conferences of Teachers of particular subjects—such as History, Geography, Modern Languages, Civics—to consider how to keep the teaching of these subjects abreast of modern knowledge and conducive to a 'League spirit' among the nations.

(iv) *Students' Organizations*. The Institute gave help when required to the already flourishing movements for correspondence and exchange

visits between students of different nationalities, and organized international conferences of students. Some of these were on a national basis, students from different nations meeting one another. Most were between the different international Student Associations, many of which would formerly have scouted any suggestion of meeting together; for example, the *Pax Romana* (Catholic), the International Jewish Association, the Confédération Internationale des Étudiants, the International Student Service, the Students' Christian Movement, and the like. A conference at Luxemburg produced an interesting volume entitled *Students in Search of a University*. Considering the extremely dangerous tendencies rife among students in various parts of Europe, these student conferences were doing very useful work.

B. International Conferences on studies formerly conducted separately by different nations.

(i) *History*. In almost every part of the world there has been a stirring of conscience over the way in which history is written. (See the record in *School Textbook Revision*, 2nd English edition, 1933.) In every country the conventional history is biased and nationalistic; and in every country there has been, since the founding of the League, a movement for making it more scientific, fair-minded, and objective. A questionnaire issued by the Institute to all nations on this subject received a world-wide response. There have been many conferences held by the Royal Historical Society and other bodies. About the year 1930 an interesting conference was held between French and German historians in an endeavour to correct the current misconceptions on both sides and obtain something like an agreed account of the events of modern history. Great advances were made, and each side agreed on certain concessions to the other. Unfortunately at the last moment the Hitler Government, which had then come into power, put a stop to the conference and forbade the publication of the German concessions, while it published the French concessions as a series of 'lies' admitted by the French themselves. One interesting result of these discussions, however, has been the history-book of a French school-master, M. Isaac, in which, at each seriously disputed point, he gives his own account in the text and the account of a reasonable German historian as a footnote. A striking feature in the 'Intellectual Co-operation Room' of the Paris Exhibition was a series

of history handbooks, showing the inflated nationalism of editions published immediately after the last War and the immense improvements in later editions. An arrangement was made by which the National Committee of I.C. could help in the improvement of text-books. If country *a* considered that the text-books of country *b* did it an injustice, it could lay its case before the National Committee of country *b*; or, more tactfully, it could write to that National Committee and ask if the historians of country *b* would be kind enough to look through some of the popular text-books of *a* and see if there were any corrections which they would recommend. This request seldom failed to bring a corresponding invitation to ask *a* for comments on *b*'s text-books, and led to a reconsideration and an improvement of the text-books on both sides. The results were often highly amusing as well as scientifically gratifying.

(ii) *International Studies*. The International Studies Conference was a most remarkable and successful enterprise. Bodies like the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) for the expert and disinterested study of international problems existed after the last War in some four or five countries. There was the pre-Nazi Hochschule für Politik in Berlin, the École des Hautes Études Politiques in Paris, and a few others. On the suggestion of the C.I.C., and by the generous help of the Rockefeller Foundation, they held a joint meeting, which was such a success that it developed into a regular periodical conference, while bodies of the same sort were established in some twenty countries. Instead of studying their problems separately, each from its own national point of view, they now selected a problem, which was analysed by a small international committee and distributed among experts of different nationalities, who studied it for two years and sent in their contributions for discussion at a General Conference. The last two subjects were 'Collective Security' and 'Peaceful Change'; the next was to be 'Economic Policies and Peace'. Such studies, expert and objective, combining the work of the best authorities in many different nations, were of quite extraordinary value and interest. Nothing like them had ever existed before.

(iii) *Social Studies*. A similar organization for the International Study of Social Questions was in process of formation by the C.I.C. It had long been urged upon us by the American National Committee and its representative, Professor Shotwell. The first subject treated would probably have been 'L'Homme devant la Machine' or 'The



Effects of Mechanical Invention on Social Life'. A great deal of preparatory work had already been done on this problem at the Institute in co-operation with the International Labour Office.

C. So far we have spoken of conferences definitely organized or initiated by the C.I.C., generally with financial help from the Rockefeller or Carnegie Foundations. There were also various *Mixed Activities* in conjunction with other bodies:

(i) With the International Labour Office: A Study of the *Chômage des Intellectuels*, i.e. of unemployment among university graduates or generally among 'black-coated workers'. This was a continuous research. A Bureau of University statistics was set up at the Institute, and in 1935 in the Institute's periodical *Bulletin* an account was given of the measures taken in thirty-three different countries for dealing with this dangerous problem. The general method was to forecast as far as possible what sort of work was likely to be in demand in the next five or ten years—e.g. will there be a demand for teachers, for engineers, and the like—and to let the Secondary Education authorities know. A watch was also kept upon the new professions which were springing up, particularly the numerous new administrative and organizing posts.

(ii) An Educational Mission to China. The Chinese Government asked the C.I.C. to send a mission to confer with them about educational problems, e.g. on problems of scientific agriculture and engineering, and on the general problem of spreading information among a people who have no alphabet, particularly by the use of the cinema in place of the text-book. We were extremely glad to be able to make this contribution to the remarkable renaissance which was in progress in China up to the time of the Japanese invasion, and sent four educationists, English, French, German, and Polish, together with an Italian expert from the Educational Cinema Institute in Rome. A study was also made of the best means of training Chinese students in Europe. In both undertakings the Labour Office co-operated.

(iii) Science and Social Relations, and in particular the effect on industrial conditions of continuous scientific invention. This subject has long been under the consideration of the Labour Office, who have held conferences of Employers and Workmen. Later on they added men of science, and invited the co-operation of the C.I.C.

#### D. With other organizations or with individuals.

(i) The cinema has obviously immense potentialities of influence on the encouragement of good will or bad will between nations and hence on peace and war; on the corruption or elevation of the public taste; and on education in the more direct sense. The C.I.C. had long been studying these questions and holding conferences with the Trade and with Film Institutes.

The Educational Cinema Institute at Rome was unfortunately abolished when Italy left the League, and the C.I.C. took its place as the organ for testing and certifying films of purely educational value, which by the Convention of 1933 are now admitted to the principal countries free of import duty.

(ii) *Radio*. There were many conferences with the great broadcasting companies for co-operation in work for peace, educational work, exchange of programmes, repertories, disks, &c. A series of studies on the use of radio in schools was published in 1934 and the subject was regularly followed in the *Bulletin*.

In 1936 there was an International Convention on the use of radio in the interests of peace and the avoidance of international offence.

(iii) *Conferences of Individuals*. Most of the above conferences or studies have some direct utilitarian aim, but the Committee of Arts and Letters (President, M. Paul Valéry) turned boldly away from such considerations and aimed at pure 'intellectual co-operation' for its own sake between individual writers, artists, and thinkers from different nations. The leaders of thought in different nations get thus to know one another, to compare ideas, to make friendships or at least achieve mutual understanding, and thus to become agents of mutual understanding between their respective peoples. These conferences have been held in almost every country in Europe except Great Britain. The subjects have been varied: 'Goethe' at the Goethe Centenary at Frankfurt; 'Art and the State' in Venice; 'A New Humanism' in Budapest; 'The Future of Culture' in Madrid; 'The Future of Literature' in Paris; 'The Philosophic Result of the New Discoveries in Science' in Warsaw. There have also been Open Letters exchanged between various leaders of thought, e.g. between Freud and Einstein on the 'Causes of War', followed up by Waelder's treatise on the same subject; between various journalists on the maladies of the Press in their different countries, between such Indian or Chinese

thinkers as Rabindranath Tagore or Yuan-shi-Pei and similar figures in the West.

#### E. Work on Legal Questions.

The legal section of the Institute studied various international problems and some of its proposals have resulted in conventions. Proposals for amending the patent laws so as to secure some rights to the real inventor as distinct from the commercial patentee have had important effects in some countries, but have not led to any general convention. Much the same may be said for the problems of the *Droit d'Artiste* (i.e. the right of an artist who has sold his work to prevent mutilation or alteration of it by the purchaser), and the *Droit de Suite* (i.e. his right, when a picture which he has sold goes up in value, to have some percentage on subsequent sales). At the time of the outbreak of war, however, some amendment of the Law of Copyright seemed likely to be assured by a fresh world Conference to be held at Brussels to unify the two systems now for the most part dividing the world, the Convention of Berne and that of Havana. A Convention on the Protection of Works of Art in times of War or Revolution was also under consideration by governments; another on the Preservation of National Treasures (*Patrimoine Artistique National*) was going forward. This was intended to prevent great works of art belonging to small or poor nations from being bought up and carried away by foreigners.

F. The agreement made in 1937 between the C.I.C. and the Council of Scientific Unions bore particularly good fruit. Apart from technical conferences such as those on 'Mathematical Method' at Zürich, on 'Phytohormones' at Paris, on 'Magnetism' at Strasbourg, on the 'Measurement of Certain Radiations' at Groningen, there were in 1939 one on 'Science and Social Relations' (see above, § C, iii) and a very large one on the 'Application of the Calculus of Probabilities'. The great Conference at Warsaw in 1938 on 'The Philosophical Results of the Recent Discoveries in Physics' has been published and forms a book of exceptional value and interest.

The Diffusion of Science, by such instruments as the radio, the cinema, and the specialist press was being studied, and a scheme had been drawn up in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation for the purpose of ensuring (1) that the explanations should be accurate,

and (2) that the public should be given some understanding of the scientific spirit and method as well as mere information about the facts.

G. The Publications of the Institute, arising out of the above activities, were very numerous. They were generally in the two official languages, French and English, but sometimes, if finances permitted, in other languages as well. Translation is obviously one means of making the thought of one nation known to another, and the Institute published regularly an *Index Translationum*, i.e. a list sent in by every country of the foreign works translated into its language. This list was both helpful to readers and valuable as an indication of the books that were at any time most strongly influencing European thought. It also published two series of translations into French of the chief classics of South American literature and of Japanese literature, the expense in each case being borne by the government of the country interested.

Financially, the regular budget of the Institute came to about 3,250,000 French francs, or, say, £30,000, without counting certain large contributions to special purposes, particularly from the Rockefeller and Carnegie Foundations. Roughly speaking, the work of Intellectual Co-operation depended chiefly on the French Government's regular donation to the League of Nations of an Institute and two million francs; secondly, on the American contributions; thirdly, on the regular annual subscriptions of some forty-two governments who signed an *Acte International* to that effect. No contributions were made by Germany, Italy, Japan, or Great Britain. The abstention of the Axis Powers is easily understood, but the refusal of the British Government to take any part in an undertaking which seemed so exactly to correspond with the desires of the nation in international policy, and in which individual British subjects have played such an important part, has never been adequately explained.

#### THE FUTURE

The above sketch, rough and incomplete as it is, shows on what a vast field the League's Intellectual Organization had undertaken to work, a field almost comparable to that of the International Labour Office. It would not have been wise to extend it much farther, at any rate not until some great increase had been possible both in funds and in personnel. The staff of the Institute was then, by British standards,

though not by French, both underpaid and overworked. The British and American members had to be provided for on a separate scale. The Director, M. Henri Bonnet, afterwards a member of the Free French National Committee at Algiers, and now French Ambassador to the United States, was not only a devoted worker and organizer, but had the power of inspiring his staff with his own enthusiasm and convincing his non-French subordinates and colleagues of his completely international outlook.

At the diplomatic conference in Paris in May 1938, at which forty-two Governments met to pass the *Acte International* for the support of the Institute, speaker after speaker emphasized the same point: that the people whom he represented were longing not merely for peace but for international understanding, friendship, and some approach to human brotherhood; that almost all doors were shut against them in politics, in economics, in material relations; only in one region was the way still free, the great region of art, letters, science, imagination, the discovery of truth, and the creation of beauty. Towards that goal nations can still move together, forming, in M. Paul Valéry's words, a free *Société des Esprits*, unhampered by the nagging friction of political controversy. When peace returns we may surely hope to see Great Britain stand with France and America in the front rank of this great movement.

After the present War, if, as is greatly to be hoped, some Organ of Intellectual Co-operation is set on foot by the United Nations, its work will be in many ways different. It will be more difficult, wider in scope, and at the same time more desperately needed than ever.

The problem of education in particular will be much larger. Before the War, or at least before the year 1933, there existed in most countries of Europe a reasonably good system of education, in which the C.I.C. was directed by a unanimous Assembly to make or encourage one particular reform. No doubt every national system was open to criticism from different points of view and in some countries the general level was low; but the fault which the C.I.C. was specially told to correct was a general unconscious nationalism, particularly in the teaching of history. This duty was relegated to a Sub-committee, under my chairmanship, which worked with considerable success right up to the time when its efforts were swept away in one country after another by the growing tide of the National-Socialist revolution. The text-books in Prussia, for instance, while Dr. Becker was Minister of

Education, were very thoroughly reformed, and the reports which were sent in to the Sub-committee from all parts of the world showed that in almost every country there was some recognition of the need of improvement.

The problem after the War will be much deeper and more far-reaching. A peculiarly unscientific and immoral system has been imposed on boys and girls for ten years in Germany, and for lesser periods in the satellite countries. Besides this, the excessive nationalism of the Nazis and Fascists has stirred feelings of opposition in their neighbours and stimulated their nationalism too.

There will thus for any future successor to the C.I.C. be a formidable preliminary task; the task of eradicating from Germany and some other countries the influences of a peculiarly vile system, imposed on both boys and girls with intense rigour and often, for obvious psychological reasons, accepted by them with enthusiasm. The methods for achieving this eradication have been discussed in several publications; for example in the Report of the Joint Committee of the London International Assembly and the Council for Education in World Citizenship of which I was Chairman, and more in detail in pamphlets such as that on *Education in Post-War Germany* by Minna Specht.

Secondly, the whole standard of education has in all countries been lowered by the necessary concentration upon the War. In particular, there will be an immense work of restoration to be done in the countries occupied by Germany, especially those in the east of Europe. Everywhere the existing educational systems have been interfered with, and the teachers and intellectual leaders in various degrees suppressed or set aside, while in some countries, such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, a deliberate policy has been followed of destroying the whole national culture and extirpating all educational establishments above the elementary school. This appalling problem is described and measures for dealing with it suggested in the above-mentioned Report of the Joint Committee.

Lastly, there remains the work of 'Intellectual Co-operation' proper, that is the friendly intercourse between leaders of thought in different countries, conferences of learned societies, and the various activities described in the earlier part of this paper. Here, also, conditions will be much more difficult. A large number of the leading savants, artists, and thinkers have been killed, exiled, or seriously disabled; universities and learned societies have been broken up and will have to be rebuilt;

the chaotic social conditions of Europe will for some time make travelling almost impossible; and even when order is restored there will remain the obstacle of wide-reaching and extreme poverty. Yet the need for this work will be greater than ever. The presence in London during the war of representatives of so many nations and their co-operation in discussions of political and intellectual problems have shown what need there is of increased mutual understanding between them; the need will be even more pressing, perhaps, between those elements that have left their countries to carry on the War from centres of security abroad and those who have struggled against famine and persecution at home; and no one can fail to see the importance of attaining between the Western Democracies and Russia not merely specific military or political agreements but a deeper and more intimate understanding such as was aimed at, and often attained, between individuals in the conferences and 'conversations' of the old C.I.C. What may be practicable in this field must be a subject of careful inquiry after the War, when conditions begin to be less obscure. It is probable that there will be in many parts of Europe a great desire for Anglo-American ideas, as well as Anglo-American help; a generous response to this demand may be taken for granted, but great tact will be necessary to avoid friction, especially in two quarters. American 'modernistic utilitarianism' in education will often offend the high classical traditions of the great centres of European culture; while our attachment to the principles and institutions of constitutional democracy and freedom may at times conflict with the claims of totalitarian Russia. For meeting all these dangers much patient 'intellectual co-operation' will be necessary, such as might be carried out by an organization on the lines of the old C.I.C., but much more vigorously supported by public opinion and by reliable endowments.

A valuable outline of a *Permanent International Organization for Education* has been drawn up by the Council for Education in World Citizenship on the initiative of Mr. Gwilym Davies. But the literature on this whole subject is already very large, especially in America and England; I have merely mentioned some particular studies with which I have been personally connected.

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The above anticipations have been fulfilled by the formation of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization,

familiarly known by its initials U.N.E.S.C.O. Its general purpose will be much the same as that of the C.I.C., and it starts with the whole-hearted support of the British and American Governments and consequently with much larger funds and greater facilities. Consequently its programme is much more ambitious than would have been prudent for the C.I.C. It also lays more stress on popular education and is more affected by the social and political ideals of its period in Britain, France, and the United States. Russia is not a member.

Its aims and scope have been brilliantly set forth by the Director, Dr. Julian Huxley, in *Unesco, its Purpose and its Philosophy*, 1946, and there can be no doubt about the enthusiasm and wide outlook with which the new organization is facing its great task.



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